

o.blēk





***o·blēk***

<sup>7</sup>**oblique** (o•blēk, leik), a.(sb.) Also: oblyke, -like, -lick [ad. L. *obliqu-us*, f. *ob-* pref. – an element *liqu-*, lic- (cf. *licinus* bent upward): cf. F. *oblique* (13th-14th c. in Godef.).] 1432–50 tr. HIGDEN (Rolls) II. 207 The stappes ber [in sowthe part of Ethioppe] be oblike and contrarious [*ubi oblique et pune contraria fiunt vestigia*] to theyme whiche dwelle . . . vnder that pole artike. 1697 DRYDEN *Virg. Georg.* IV. 420 Four Windows are contriv'd, that strike To the four winds oppos'd their Beams oblique.

# *o·blēk/7*

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A JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE ARTS

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EDITED BY  
PETER GIZZI AND CONNELL McGRATH



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*o•blēk*

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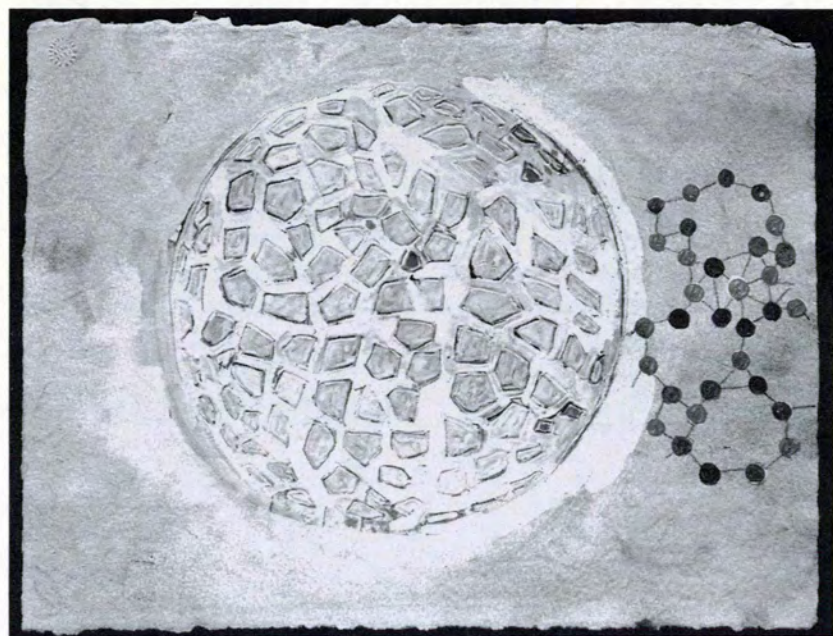




*In Memoriam:*  
Samuel Beckett  
1906-1989

Deviser of the voice and of its hearer and of himself.  
Deviser of himself for company. Leave it at that. He speaks  
of himself as of another. He says speaking of himself, He  
speaks of himself as of another. Himself he devises too for  
company. Leave it at that. Confusion too is company up to  
a point. Better hope deferred than none. Up to a point. Till  
the heart starts to sicken. Company too up to a point. Better  
a sick heart than none. Till it starts to break. So speaking  
of himself he concludes for the time being, For the time be-  
ing leave it at that.

from *Company*, Samuel Beckett



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JOHN ASHBERY

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WILD BOYS OF THE ROAD  
VILLANELLE

## WILD BOYS OF THE ROAD

"Why, there's the well where the message fell apart:  
its rusted chain gleams still. And there's the happy one,  
so little she was excused from most occasions.  
The blinkered sun circles it now, the last act,  
noting how little its motions will be called on the carpet  
(or it will fade the carpet) with the resulting freedom to act  
like a knife, or a snake in the night. When it's all over  
we say I could drink it now and then,  
about three times a week. But the heavenly uproar  
is heavier then; storms mean business  
in this day and age. The only viable  
mode is to walk out; you'll find the slick streets keep time  
with your advancing to what is really seen when it is sold.

"Fresh air will have noticed the pond waterfall, how  
the trillium darted out from underneath but  
had nothing to say, no excuse for being there,  
though perhaps one for what was there before, as a henchman's  
eyelids close just before the deep fact of one  
sitter's enduring, to pass the test, and then  
everything is all right; the sun seems to have shifted  
its position, allowing gray skies, crazy boys to bloom  
all over the place, and yet we are here, safe, unsleeping,  
perjured to a man but that's  
what gets removed I guess. You have to  
return to the old. And age builds it shining new for you.  
We have too many things to think about  
not to notice the dull horseman's color of coming  
back to check once again. Besides, the lilac  
flavor of after-shave stood up, grew him a new one,

and all cattle, all sentries were dispersed from the yard.  
It's hard being in an epic but harder still  
to hold onto the thread as it whips like a kite-string,  
and some of us do get our deposit back. But for the most part  
there is only land and that is obvious,  
too near the lunar chasm to be depended on  
and too smart not to give us the slip  
as the occasion warrants."

When all is said and done we avoid our friends  
not from fear of us but from a holy desire  
not to cause a commotion. Poor boy, you thought  
to have sipped from the center would be such an easy, exact thing,  
like kneeling in church. But you see now how the watchman  
destroys whatever it is one happens to be made of, purloins  
the bulging eyes of expectation, leaving  
curious pebbles in their place, or better  
yet, no things, nothing of which the touch  
can be determined: strange, elliptical events  
with no name for them in the glossary. How the vegetation  
would take over now: we'd be stalled again, the bad  
smell on the verge of happening once again, the tin  
posy in the doorjamb as unconcerned as if this  
were a hundred and fifty years ago. Something has got to stop,  
yet I tell you the enemies are for us, shouting in our ears.  
The leaves are too little at the top  
and the years, well they come to seem little too, little and nifty,  
though I suppose not for long, and I seem to hear  
something will wring us, wrench us from the extremes  
of piety on the one hand and salacious diffidence on the other: just  
enough for the sing-song to get along, as we were,  
nice and easy for us, stone plinths with fringe of grass.

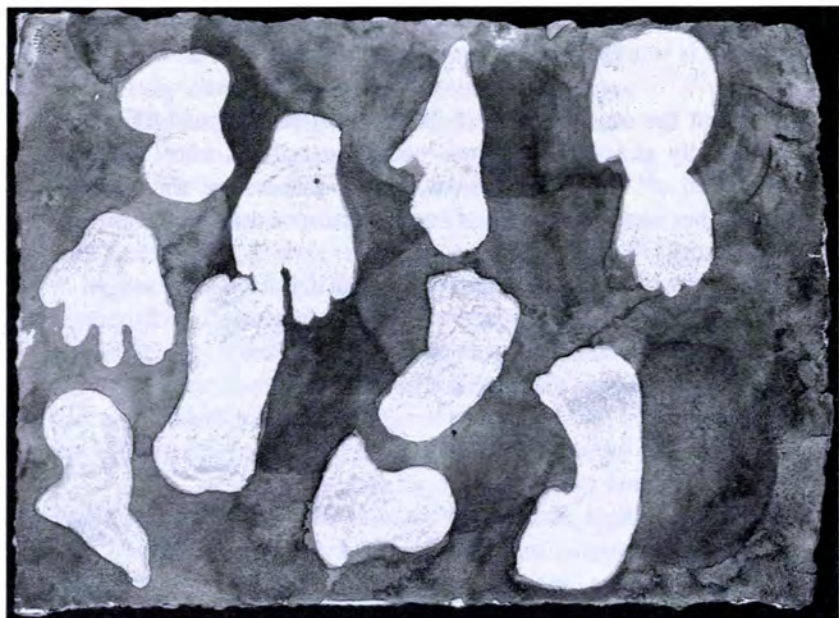
## VILLANELLE

As it unfolded and took on something of the aspect  
of a garden in the rain, the acclaim with which others  
greeted it scattered too, evaporated. Now who  
is to say when battered night comes and you look  
distractedly over your shoulder whether the owners  
of that night had the right to remove any of it  
in strips and mask-shaped pieces, so that by morning  
nothing of it remained except crescent  
accents under cups? And they were seen as truly gone,  
arch-fiends of emptiness, that it stayed  
to lighten awhile? What if I told you that every  
aspect of the cause had been pre-ordained, from  
the brokers in wind-cheaters to the tumescent  
ear of corn in its shock, and that no one, not one radio  
had ever been accused of inattentiveness to the  
gradual unravelling of the scene?

This would have mattered bleakly to those, the growers,  
who stay behind and amid bats and laburnum devise acrostic  
governors whose motive shall be colorless and whose device,  
strangely scrolled across a banner, translates  
easily into Urdu as: "Let's put the boys' fire out."  
No, there were sad others too, but let's hear it  
in the rain-bejewelled jungle gym for the copers, the  
coppers-out whose ears, the brass color of tubas, flare insanely  
out just a little as each new podium prank thanks  
into place, like a hive of bees, questioning, unsure if the date  
were last year's. And if so, deliver them a warning:  
mornings are timely, sure no feet drag, and yet a weariness  
as of a wolf's blasts the moment into shards. We were as good  
as in bed, and all

we really wanted to know was the time on the other fellow's watch. How hard he made it, and into what twosomes the grisly smile delivered hands, prom-dates, catches in throats, the horrible manliness for which time is an ascending ramp crowned by moonglow made of hundreds of cigarette ends, and the return to town is witchy, twin scotties on a leash.

How fast the others collected! Were we to be siphoned off as casually as last year, pinned with a string? We who were well off until a certain day, and now, loitering, the starlet shakes her beads in contempt: no we had not even begun to understand where the crime is, to what succinctness of being we are summoned if it ever goes away! The threads, at the back, seem to match an image our fathers dribbled, but reversed, the image is Main Street, Titusville, and there is no other home than these pebbles, placid and revered. There are ghosts on the trail, too, but until we have done with hopscotch, the little girl crawls away and twin sinkers emerge like blobs out of the twilight, there is no point to the crash, and no end. The house is very revealing. She said it ought to. Oh my first fears, leaders, never turning over, never looking back, what is it on tomorrow's agenda? What would you have done?





---

RAY RAGOSTA

---

THE VARIETIES OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE, II

## 1. (AT THE COAST)

Words shipwreck upon ecstasy, yet are  
unable to navigate the shoals of discourse.  
A memory moves into fog  
and takes human form.

Though propositions are scrupulously set forth,  
syllables split in the ear,  
like wood,  
and disquisition founders.  
Silence grows molten.

Pinched optic disquiet of the figure's  
drifting, as seated, then standing,  
till consuming passion cools:  
The questions are too large and don't fit;  
sources of information wash up in the wrong places.

## 2. (EMBLEM)

"Like a serpent swallowing its tail"  
does not describe the event,  
but things close in,  
as in a dark room or desert.

Door slides noiseless across the dune.

Free, rotary circulation of mind  
moves on the object to press against:  
a creature, swallowing not itself,  
but another the same size,  
body distorted wholly for the moment,  
then gradually re-composed,  
complete in monstrous abridgment.

### 3. (EXCURSIONS)

A kind of malignant mind creeps through earth,  
lit only by the light of the movies.  
Facts reversed will not clear the atmosphere or escape  
into the crevices of memory.  
Not that all this is foul, but itinerant.  
A poverty limits our excursions,  
for to go begging at the four corners  
would inevitably land us in jail,  
with its attendant universals,  
dark, dampness, long constraint, which evidence  
keen understanding of human nature  
with its spots, wrinkles, and pestilent beginnings.  
Only so many notes act as departures,  
leaving more order than can be reckoned with.

## 4. (THE FLOATING LIFE)

Opulent life, foredoomed to suffer defect,  
and drift, rises like bubbles.

The bark of wit sails upward, and lodges,  
while below, lines of conversation cross in winged  
consternation.

(Another bee-bred condition.)

Poised upright as candles, with gestures flickering,  
guests eye each other with the sway of insolence—  
moon-eyed, fish-eyed, red-eyed, cattle-eyed, hawk-eyed,  
eagle-eyed or hairy-eyed.

The plots they hatch are mostly of a personal nature.

This life, a floating life, has been put into an  
exceeding maze,  
though it sails a lake cut and hollowed out by the  
hand of art,  
to make a perfect circle.

Its waters, sulphurous and medicinal to the taste,  
are said to possess a quality to cement fractures.  
Here and there, particles of the edifice dissolve  
toward a great and famous articulation of manner.

## 5. (GHOST)

Once having had the power to walk through walls,  
then losing it half-way through  
though he is not clean gone,  
for his words emerge as moss on stone,  
the trace of salt-spirit lingering,  
and the mouth now conducted to manifestation.  
Never was this host a wild one, but mentor,  
referee rude to look upon,  
who drugged demons with a hidden instrument,  
then drew out their claws and teeth  
(assuming neither data nor its measure).  
Deep of this world is bridged by slow initiation  
and fabric unfurled is hardly apprehended.  
What clots in the system is a grand scheme—  
map fossilized, sidereal, apart.

## 6. (POINT OF RETURN)

Heaps of earth enter the horizon  
of the anaesthetic estate—a dream  
of things (*awaiting re-animation*).  
But no weather to speak of here.  
Rather, it is a neutral place,  
where finite loss is plumbed then pigeonholed.  
Life no higher than animates the spinal cord,  
or notion of non-entity craving.  
To cleave the ingredients,  
examine them till one grows myopic,  
yields no more than writhing segments  
of any mutilated worm,  
undetermined reflex, unchecked movement toward.  
In time, the segments will dry up, bronzed.  
Stared at long enough, in light, they glitter:  
forms of eidolons who haunt the fundament.

## 7. (TAXIDERMIST'S DREAM)

The thinking member decays,  
as reason, asleep in the attic,  
produces "obscurities on every side."  
Great ornament and sink of doubt.

With other guests we share a stolen peace,  
and can never be dressed for the occasion,  
for this accumulated apparel,  
however carefully laid out, mildews.

In the rafters, a taxidermist dreams—  
asphyxiated mover like the stuffed birds,  
whose feathers will no longer stir,  
either poked with beams or coaxed in low tones.

No exact relation between house and song.  
Just random noise within architecture.



## 8. (THRESHOLD)

Flawed labor and pitched dreams,  
sharp division at the threshold,  
where parodies, pieced together from colored glass,  
nest in the fanlight, igniting the argument  
(behavior observed through sunglasses).  
The rude tales of the inhabitants percolate:  
with lewd debates careering toward  
the Incomprehensible Maximum,  
laughter filtered through seawater, then age.  
Sand pours into their mouths,  
along with fragmented history:  
broken glass, vial of a lost potion,  
molecules of mariners and perished travelers.  
On this manor of an obscured process,  
which we are made to swallow,  
and eventually become.

## 9. (RETURNED)

“Blown up at the applause . . . ” the spectacle  
by what contraption survives its dust,  
the action stubbed and wired back together,  
as if something else had been enacted.  
Visions are interpreted to bewildered guests,  
arriving at the place, isolated,  
with lights eternally turned off.  
So who would know to witness the result?  
And what would such ignorance induce;  
but sign of circumstance on steeled parchment,  
where the story is etched then erased,  
the points made stubborn to affirmation.  
Events unduly ascribed to their agency  
thus open the floodgates and extend the premise,  
while beams of searchlights shoot out randomly  
to create an odd horizon for the landscape.  
Notice the hands waving  
to write down, and off, the element.

---

# HANNAH WEINER

---

FROM *PICTURES AND EARLY WORDS*

The words in capitals are seen.

POWER beside efficiency, prevents POWER. KNOWLEDGE through POWER. I dream of new apt., large & a AM-FM radio, phonograph. Beer & bialy not so good. I dream of large roast beef but eat ¼ lb. Words in gas bubbles all over street, huge. I didn't read them. Many URGE & UPSET on shelf.

ENERGY in air, across page. They want me to say POWER. Dear Divine Healing Power. This is the hour for me to be well. Get rid of the swell in my stomach & please, set my body at ease.

I get reminders of things that make me angry. I get upset but the last few days, especially when I'm blue. I just say, ah don't bother me with that. Sometimes now I feel the power rocking through me, not always over all of my body. The last time I kept my mind really still & black waves came one after the other to my closed eyes. It felt so relaxing & marvelous & then I saw the flowers on my table top. Then they repeated into another pattern & then I heard a voice and saw words that said NOT THIS OFFICE & NOT THIS "L" and saw a black t-shirt on my left arm.

I see a lot of NOW SEE & cracks of light in myself & others where there seem to be a need for renewal, cleansing or healing. OUT WEST on gate.

Clock face turns blue for period of time in which I am or am not supposed to do something.

Wine – my body lights up – I see the light in my body – especially the cracks lit up.

Big blue flashes of energy on the street today instead of the former small ones. I zap them away with my third eye. No bubble words in the street. The sock I wore on right foot is green & the sock I wore on left foot is blue.

A bottle of chablis under my arm on the wall. Chablis on the table. D's name in white wine. C  
H  
A  
B I have red wine.  
B  
L  
I  
S  
Light dit on chablis. D's name through  
white wine. He prefers white?

5-7 NO OPEN in lock color. Now 8-9. Stayed in. WRITE in red. OFFICE in light under red. Office tomorrow. I go to get up early. 9-11 LISTEN in purple. 9 in quilt color. Why stay in bed? It's freezing. Fantasies about D. WRONG

PERSON  $\begin{smallmatrix} N & \backslash & / \\ O & & \\ T & / & \backslash \end{smallmatrix}$  NOW.

Thurs: Waiting: possibly D will come tonight. WED/FRI on his head the other night when he talked of visiting. NO THURS over tonight.

I'm always asking the spirits what do you mean? NO SUN ONLY so I ask what?  $\begin{smallmatrix} M \\ E \\ A \\ N \end{smallmatrix}$  it replies. I have to be careful of

my vocabulary. <sup>M</sup>  
<sup>E</sup> looks like Chinese letters suddenly.  
<sup>A</sup>  
<sup>N</sup>  
 The characters change when I'm not quite looking at it.

Earlier THURS on cord in green, on curtain in reddish gold, then a red NO over the **WRONG** in faint wiggles. Lights dim on he's coming. Blue light TONIGHT on stomach. Amidst all this you'd think I could tell if he's coming or not. "NOT" IT'S SO GOOD. goDd. D does not come.

Christmas in yellow. Now. D ½ & ½ yellow & green. NEED in green on telephone. NO in purple on telephone. Telephone looks like it swells up maybe 2X size. Telephone emanates a reddish glow. NO WRONG on dial. 5-6 on cord. No calls.

The meat tastes awful. I had meat yesterday. Guess I can't handle. CAN'T HANDLE on wine. Wine over danish. Danish in air 2 days in a row. Pick up wine glass. NOW IMMEDIATELY through glass, glass on shelf. Chocolate of danish on wine. Hear Valpolicella, which is what it is. Pick up glass. NOT NOW in wine.

The danish has some cherries in syrup on top. They don't like (cherries on stomach). NOT in hallway — the cherry danish jumps from the window. What's wrong? See pale not red cherries. Ah — it's the cancer-producing red coloring — additives. The gooey around the cherry, juice appears on the table — cornstarch? Bad for stomach.

The spirits are heavy tonight – one comments on the other who comments on me. Sometimes I think it's all my own thought – like: WED/FRI on D's head. WED was too soon (knowing D) after Thursday & Fri.

NO STAY LATE. NO DRINK on glass in bubbles.

I drink.

Cake & wine. Wine spills on page. Do I lose <sup>N</sup>power?  
 \ \ / \ /  
 POWER over wine glass.  
 / \ / \

I reach for the vitamins. I do not take them. WRONG in wavy over not. Wavy are extraneous furry not clean energy floating around that likes to talk. What is to say – is this my own mind – the various decisions & indecisions, hidden & plain knowledge?

NO(W) NEED on vitamins.

P's in purple.

WAIT in red.

OUTSIDE in yellow.

WAIT on stomach.

NO NEED in coffee cake.

NOW in green on coffee.

NOW in red on cappucino. NOW in banana liqueur.

Do colors have meaning? MEANING on shelf. Have wiggles.

Is red a warning color? Is a red "wait," a negative wait.

NO WAIT INDEFINITELY 9-11 at 10:30. I go to P's. V asks me to a party. Out in the street all kinds of lights, WALK, TIME. There are stairs. Earlier no stairs this week. After 10 min. NO STAY in red so I put on my coat & see BIG MISTAKE as I'm saying goodbye. When I get home it says NO NEED LEAVE IMMEDIATELY. I'm still doing things too precipitously.

We're into a lot of NO OUT 8-9 etc. & the clock face turning blue.

NO FEED. Who? What? I must learn not to complete sentences for them, or anyone. Don't fill in – wait & listen.

A black t-shirt, long sleeves, round neck, in air.

D didn't come Wed or Fri. He also didn't come Thurs or Sat. So much for words!

NOW in yellow on wine. 1-3. They're playing with my thought that D might come. D on gate. J? Left arm flashes red gold light.

ALONE in air.

Is the handwriting I see around me the handwriting I could have if I wrote more legibly?

This handwriting is a little different from my other.

I need some gloves & found a pair in a taxi the other night but didn't keep them because they made me burp. Perhaps I was too hasty & should have cleaned them up.



D's name on forehead of baby on soap box, across my chest. Wine appears in wine glass. I get bottle out. D knocks on door. The gate is not now an opposition.

KEEP on t-shirt.

KEEP on dungarees.

D's name in brown t-shirt.

NOW WRITE

DRIVE

1-3

Energy spirals in the corners of my curtain.

Saw clear hands last night on wall, in air.

Image of liqueur bottle goes through door.

NOT NOW SO LONELY

NO ALONE in a pink/blue circular design.

NOT A PERSON in pink & blue design along quilt.

I was thinking D might become a lover & then I wouldn't be so lonely.

I think the pink & blue is taking the form of a mandala type drawing.

The mandala design appears on the wall, smaller, & in the red & green colors of the quilt.

D's name in fur coat as I took it off.

1-5 Visit D? VISIT on stomach. 2-3 Gas bubbles on 3.  
Leave on 3? NOW — COFFEE in blue on chest. HAVE

SOME 2-3 on NOW. Not clear. After 1-5? Red 5. Before 5?

5 in air. No clearer now than when I started to write.

\ \ / /  
COFFEE in white pants <sup>N</sup> O Red 3. It's 5 to 2. Go now.  
/ / \ \

Not wrong. Zap on toe. D across chest in red. Have 2-3 in eyes. Have coffee? Get dressed? Go now to D? NOW in air.

2:15 — D's name on telephone. I call him. He's just getting up, doesn't need anything — he's going out. Now I can't visit. I missed yesterday & today. I curse the spirits & bang my head on the wall & cry out loud.

NOW MEDITATE in boot color.

---

JEAN GROSJEAN

---

THREE ELEGIES

translated from the French by  
Keith Waldrop

## XII

See the meagre vapor my cry released when evening followed so close on dawn, no time for springs to drink in passing clarities.

Now I am dead or close to it but no lambency reaches me from the grave, where I had hoped to see blazing the runes that you recite.

Where trails descend and the steel-surfaced river, you are left on the peak, its bones bared by lightning.

I know your light stays on but when my eyes go out will I have harbored only a dreadful thirst?

Was that why you woke me, so that going back to sleep I remember you—and the night, dreaming of you, is different?

But you, what would you remember, unless you live in the faint underground clamor that succeeds your voice?

Give me again a poplar grove, its gold tinkling with each breath of fall under the soft sky, where the wild cherry tree laves impalpable waves over its lean reddened limbs.

May my soul in its sepulchre still shine from your beauty that I have seen face to face.

When the last drum beats reveille you will behold in my eyes of a tyro the lines erased that will have razed your cheek.

## XIII

If the hellebore opening its greenish flower does not bend our eyes towards a winter thicket, it is because your face is our hearts' fascination.

Your light shines nearer on a humid outcrop of rock and more limpid in the bare tree than could summers of heaven with their interminable suns.

While you are obscured by clouds flinging wool and arrows against the hills, the few flakes of snow they drop into our furrows shine farther in the depths of evening than geraniums in Berlin.

Rising, you raised eyes that day whose shadow now falls on us and your pallor is the last sign my eyes serve, while victories twist their lips in rage.

Where are the wars for which you were the trophy, now that a single cannon in the distance thunders as occasionally as a yawn and hope weeps among consuls crunching birds' bones?

Have your sentences, whose shadow and portent long turned seaward, foundered—leaving the space of the world but a desert between us?

The more I bury myself in the country to escape the tides rehashing their inept sermon with a mouthful of pebbles, the louder I hear the breakers of your silence.

The leaves you were losing adore—prostrate on the ground—your naked gesture they had concealed, or else lift in the wind to graze your fingers still raised to me.



---

DENNIS PHILLIPS

---

FROM *ARENA*

You'll hear it.

Because sheetmetal hangs from fine wire,  
knocks together in the breeze you make  
when you open that book.

Because you'll hear it and the book's  
thick pages. Which are foils now. Or  
paddles. Because how do they interact  
with the air?

Because there is no lift, because you'll  
hear it. And no drag. But simple  
frontal force. Nor that either.

Because you *fear* stasis.

The book so familiar.

The forms your dearest plan.

Because you'll hear. You're here.

Where a hand follows the contour.

Because there is no door.  
No metal. No heat.



Water must have spilled.

You face the stern cleric  
and demand that he remove the icons  
or explain.

Suddenly they were standing,  
several of them were wiping the table  
or their books.

The weather or the alignment of planets;  
Society hitting saturation or a simple acting out.

Water spilled or dry icons remained.  
It was *her* religion but she refused to defend the priest.  
Her lap was stained and the couch she sat on.

You had accused or confronted the priest.  
She was found in the parking lot  
setting a pile of wood chips on fire.

A very small amount of water.  
A thin, even tide.  
Planets or weather, spin of the earth.

You would imagine her later,  
you would wonder about the hands that held the matches.

Or all around her faces of saints.

This question. And your monoxide  
sensitive lakeland.

Just impress us with a deep ceremony  
boulders pushing against thin soles.

Still water. Full moon.  
Impress of mountains (shadow) on  
water (shadow)

Just find a way to keep warm  
"Each phosphorescent stone"  
and any apocrypha. Your eyes  
water. You've tried as hard as you could  
and yet every answer reverses  
with no insulation.

The very *idea* of eating  
at a time like this.

Days wired smooth  
a cool smooth palm.

Or you have no idea where they come from.

Just a molecule, carbon monoxide, oxygen, ozone.

A fire?

Where swarms of fish under a surface of oil  
where by day ducks and now  
by inverted mountains flat, hydrogen and  
oxygen, ready to freeze.

A quiet, a silent air.

Your face. Your idea.

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# MICHAEL GIZZI

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SOLD AMERICAN  
NOT ONE CENTIME

## SOLD AMERICAN

'The greatest key to courage is shame'  
— Kerouac

Most learn early on  
they're not their brother Tom Paine's keeper  
jungle stew that strangers are

But we  
the Good Joe of the many  
the gloms the fandom the weepers  
recognize also affluence

And wretches  
there but for the dead n' living jitters go I  
licking sherbet from quietude  
to phooey overmuch

until We  
the Hungry forage trifle nuts  
and Pluck  
juxtapose starvelings scouting in  
the Dutch dollar gutter for a kitchen porch

Not to be exalted on veal *medaillons* you can  
bamboozle anyone deals  
Nor poached war whupass  
stealing Mom's apple pie at fax speed  
above the fracas grief and dolor  
Hungering under bush-edge  
drinking themselves sick  
who have no Dust Bowl Co-op to get to  
no lynx coat better life  
of a certain sum  
no cab to Glades for kamikazes

So where've you been Abuse  
Pouring the wine Dim  
too much cheap soup  
for a gaunt sinking  
There everything here belongs to me  
Rain-bones  
relieved of a sea change  
As you gradually starve  
remember the best things  
subordinate burlap sleeping free  
wilder in the film noir rain  
a certain soupçon Franklin Club no-cash-flow look  
what paves the heart pond  
the one the flies buzz  
and the kids titter  
But ah never mind  
they've good enough advice  
as far as it goes they have  
on the B flat bighand  
Uriah Heep Time  
What's the use of making  
3 sheets to the wind  
Sing a song exhibit sores  
Sing a song ex a White Man

## NOT ONE CENTIME

I failed as a Magic Christian being articulate  
Sawed-off had to crawl back under my cork  
Comb the microphone out of my hair  
Weird as it got I wonder what I didn't do to get here  
Did a road come with?

All my paints have 'reborn' on them  
How not remarkable everything is  
Now I'm back in line it feels good to be invisible?  
I feint pretty well. I don't feel looks  
All I can do is wait until I split?

There is no memory after they spook you  
Of course, this makes the angels blind  
How much out there is there peering through?  
Amazing what the dead will tell you via stragglers  
I read the other day someone turned the sun on in me

See, what? I look like I feel?  
I've seen it said. If you see the wind  
Call me. Could a rumor complete the equation  
They'd love to come over and prove that they're folks  
Autumn People who deal in novelty

You'll know them by their windows  
Antiquated things they sun in their minds  
Whaddo you say that I should listen to without seeing?  
I have a tongue, too, in my head makes speeches  
A cleaner one. They never get said

See  
There had to be a lesson in it somewhere

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# JEAN DAY

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BOUT  
HOUSE OF SENTIMENT  
WAFT  
STRUCTURE'S DREAM

## BOUT

At last we can speak of taboo! After dreaming leave the bed to its disorder and come to the desk to be sober. Still early, dust floats. Birds intersect. Cowboy says "eight o'clock." He thinks he'll just get on *my old horse* and ride. On the mesa you must be very careful to say any *thing* on the table, *this* table, whose objects get happy with society and use. The pencil falls like lumber off the mill, made. Obviously the forest is fat and can take it. Our two agents joke; the can at the end of the string has nothing to hear. Father on your brim transcribes low-security signals at the end of the War: "Old Familiar needs help!"

*And suddenly it was not good to have needs outside this structure.*

Mother, dear

I have brought you some long pants

Then the part about the boy

(technically the girl)

Then it is finished.

This is the sea:



## HOUSE OF SENTIMENT

Rested totality in conversation, it was always vivid there overcome with character, sitting down. You had to recognize in their flight by falling great markets where I sat down against nature, culture, not named Land of Law for nothing, the spill is blowing! blowing! Drainage, seepage, turn question on head. You never hesitate to tackle great objects, rope bundles, sacred matter against whom I was just a hot adult speculative in the onslaught of pleasure; to be, not to have, your own set of young trampling the extreme proclivity to what words have for a nice solitude, in the sense of see you, kids, later. Always void, *el tanque*, having taken, say, an hour, suspended, making a fool of yourself at Lascaux, worked up, sorry to have missed drinking performances with you in snow you declaim, disprove along a long man's jetty. Everyone speaks. Bundles sleep fixes don't get around much what gods screwed, in their pleasure, so. You never hesitate, detaining finance with some of your umbrella sweeping through the breeze. Years later, Good news Mrs., you did not kill your husband's mother's smokestack pantleg workforce ontology seeing the queen's sexy father, a righteous collectivist from down on the farm. But wasn't that our common plot to stand up in? Our own special sub-name for the coded relation of midnight?

## WAFT

Infant happiness occurs to the young buck  
all day outside the window where sun shines out  
in on him, napping, what it is might have said it  
just as well, we that sleep, say  
what's a girl to have (me) perched on objecthood,  
or hers, breeze, gaze, through smiling teeth,  
your lax though lipped, reading, insistence  
on an instrument. Then, napping, a flap  
of bay weather over us, some new, loud  
obsession, this *one* that is critical, that is  
working on a company of women who are too and long haired  
who miles away, miles before long work, everything in Capital  
and the stars pass us uncritical, absorbed with themselves  
and not looking

## STRUCTURE'S DREAM

you instruct yourself  
on how close the shade should come to the heat  
not releases  
but because on it is only pattern  
                    by moving on the bed  
                    the shape of the bed  
as the mouth  
is the fragment  
                    one same vocabulary  
yours but miniaturized, necessary  
as if it will come to understand in one  
corruption, heat, and I wake  
            in this sexual light unpersonified therefore  
            and with my phrasebook original



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RAY DiPALMA

---

TWO POEMS FOR PAUL CELAN  
MEASURES TAKEN

## TWO POEMS FOR PAUL CELAN

1

Neck of the beam  
cast from  
the thickest bone  
and the scratched  
*nichts zum nada*  
for hair  
                  totem  
not the he  
of whom  
but this facepost  
points in ponder  
at the moon  
and humbles the sun

2

Ten's a ditch  
and by tens  
or tens and threes  
turned in loops  
above the tight lariat  
we come to Celan's  
river face first

Elegy greeted  
beyond the inched  
ache of cobble  
and rain for skin

Thin horns  
so alarming

Tub soup and alum

Short mud  
the fixed bloom

Pestered matches

Black wool

## MEASURES TAKEN

Proving identity  
the mirror reasons  
a second face  
obliged by the situation  
of speech

One of one  
and that  
superfluous  
culled elliptic  
adds one on

The narrative  
runs through proof  
fastidious cordial  
and blind timed  
by quando's beating

Does and does not know  
thing in manners  
thing in chance  
full of fragments to  
mark the punctuated forecasts

Not a closed system  
but an open-ended  
compleynt and hails  
of the anonymous  
for sounding the you-apt



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# CLARK COOLIDGE

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## FROM *IN DREAM*

Rewrite it, it's an analogy to  
re-processing in process, a  
memory, according to how you  
write now: dream's a memory  
kept in process kept in present,  
whose consciousness?

– Bernadette Mayer

Says, I have the deep think coming and must make a big pot of soup. Says, why are the fish retrieved to the boat in curtains. Says, the biggest fire burns but only way far off in a tree by the house. Says, many cars parked so as to miss the guttering sun. Says, I will touch this ledge if I near the proper jacket and that trunk bend back into place. Says, the house top in the next moment will be reversed. Says, floral items indoors will seem out of focus. Says, it grows dark and I will not recall this place. Says, these leaves pale as shrimp but are not, or dead either. Says, the hall of such space it had crystallized too dark to be pictured. Says, the daughter it took to be lit in someone else's hall veered. Says, even from this distance the doorway looks false, painted as an elevator. Says, skip this image. Says, the cloud obscured the rock just at this piece of my walk, but we got back just like those two visible. Says, drink in blue, drink in hand hidden, drink to what's audible now visible. Says, she sits, holds her toe and looks at it. Says, this room is just as well that she smiles.

But I couldn't keep up with you in the Drowning Room, where it's downtown and all Berlin past a pool, a bell one could reach back and hit at the desk, where he worked, where I see the mismatched poet nerving up his doll, talking to himself so friendly, no wonder he's getting along, no women at his job, on his clout of desk, and others in sheets of dust for later. They've forgotten about Dietrich by the seabluff cave at the bottom of this house, where father has locked all your former displays, the lobby only now showing blood in waves. Keep shouting, keep stretching along walls, starting at the desk. Leaning at the bottom against walls of your body, you may think so now but when *they* start to

come through you won't want to be in here when the walls meet your body in shifts beneath of this dust, or taffy pulled, or some general all-over water scrapes. We try this location, then this all starts. We live down the stairs, then wait at a point. Something heft in balance, timing click of the Tim who works here, or did but now rises in thought a thing on the mast, this very focal crew. This union of copper with flung plates, bloomings to end up, confusion on confusions on further explanations. We don't know where we want to be in here, we have to snap erect in judgement, fear the subsequent display. I have lighted the machine. You have tugged on the rope. Nothing is visible beneath. This desk, this dust, this poet talking to himself endlessly, then taking the subway. Is there a bookstore?

Is your name a task? Simply a matter of further talk? So finally I look to myself to see who it really is and it's talking to himself in person. No wonder. No elephant. Then the top of the firstclass cabin blew off taking the stew with it. Remember this was happening today. We'll have to decide whether the shapes like rats began to filter through walls like sheets. But we find that we have decided: Falling is mainly a matter of noise. And the only place you ever see through things is in dreams. These are the only two modes our writing falls into. How silly for it to be all the same all the more and still so large. I'll not go to modify it further. We'll simply wait for it beneath and further scrapes. But this is college, once again back, and we are shortly embattled. Just try and find me, or to know what's wrong with me. Nails down the face of my other.

Then somebody dialed replay, the frost was on the locker and the trees just grew. But something else will have to be produced and waiting is done for the other. He comes in but, which we constantly avoid, and then it goes, turns blue, all

outsides of an event weightless. He then comes again and leaves for the other side. We avoid the work we're trying to produce and he does too constantly by crawling under sinking fences looking under stones in backlots next to the last hotel. These car tunes blur. Heard it different driving in that woody under the ferris wheel, a certain depth of girders loose. But meanwhile he has left again. There are girls in enamel rooms, rhythm guitarists supposedly discussing only him, snows on new cars in the next slots, but nothing works. We all go out, arrive and return, avoid and then actually fall in and sing a bit, novelties, tunnels growing beneath backyards, a new construction of elaborate sodapops constantly disappearing. But then this thing is ridiculously pinched, laterally but the frontseat of the convertible is long gone. Propane arriving. Goose of the timeless nerve.

And he gets it in with seas, foam, senseless decorations, so we'll buy new cars, settle for slots, wipe the inks from our girls, wires in stir, noddings out of enamel gestures in cool rooms, finally they leave us as we return and all snowed in together. It's the night of the bakelite or wooden guitarist leashed by Randy Newman to the frontseat of the high window we have long left it all to be seen from. But the only room to be come to has long gone. Somehow I'll never hear it again, even with blue in the title, even jacketed in khaki on the foam rubber mantle. Then he leaves again and everything outside of this is totally transformed, he leaves us totally transformed to the point we never think of him again. As if he's someone never gone beyond memory. To the point that someone else will have to be found to walk in, leave again, avoid the work involves us all, now to be forgotten. None of this at all to do with names.

But then someone stops short. Up on the roof, he hit the marble. A tiniest of messages: There will be no further birds

here. On a dime. Or is its name a rhyme of mine, that last bird calculated? I'm in a sort of plow, which opens into the roofs of a frieze.

Give me those dreams.

Her face, it's her face, face and the book. Side in the dark, one side a whiteness showing. Is it a match of her words, his full of white tiles in the sundown flame. Then how much a mirror, her face to, how much of a mess is it seemed to? Hair out long and fine, glass to the pile one wastes finding it. Her largeness hidden by another counter, book and glass, fingers on another account. I look into the long fold-out, watch for another photo, kneel it into the ground. His whiteness is showing. Hers arose until we took it, that we saw it. Facing forward, glass in her shape, then knew it.

Telling us what to do in another place just over, from this one we can see it, just barely and by raising up, a sort of vast room change with something needle, large thuds against the brown outsides. It's the hotel of an interest in boats and waiting for any purpose may be desired. As if that star is to be sent home. Movie of bears harmless and fades. I make to reach my arm to be also sent. Think of how she spends. Space on this gas billboard to be mine, my gate of height, my raise of monster slabs. It wants to give our porches farewell, slip the phrase and go. But his light is too pale, the words fade. This space for any purpose in the end to be used. I had widened it so the charges could be brought up within it and placed. But he's protesting in kind to me and he says, The fine blah blah for this use is fine. How he must hate this hotel or boat for that, for the rooms within to change and in time the thuds without together with them keep. It's night, things shut and I'm in hate. I'm nearing everything to come only from the outside. These are weak-

nesses there the limousines arrive, guy in a funny state grabs his stairwell speech out of the stew, where boats of walls are grinding. Don't lose any of your words in speech between. It's nonsense to any of us how these rooms change, how the space of it all moves around stirring monsters, raising the slats from seatbacks to make up their approach in flaws. I would consider seriously trading myself in for someone with my knowledge, to come in harm of the monster through a vast overlay on my state. But he would have to run me, the speeds between the rooms. The space, if you find the right switch, proves clutch to the change from teacher's to doctor's. I see it through a meadow with my hammerfine keyboard knowledge, drawn down, over the boat hotel in the interest of a knowledge accident. Many purposeful taking places down the allowable drain of nearby but little or no handle. Opened his case began tracing them, planes on the billboard. I came over the hill for trying to be funny but the rooms kept changing. He ordered me. Then winter comes. The entrance again of one night over in the dimensions. Gems within. Wanted wide but missing once they're mined. Thin then and plucked back only with arrow hammers, wire of the memory a hill could come between your own. But windowed only on the inside, where something is witnessed long beyond beating. A table and a crab. A bosom and the weather to dry it. It came the crystal of all my best fulfillment with a hammer, just crested it dull and rode beyond. A real calcium case in that fat suit, a one containing slots for every blue. And those arrows of the candle hornets ruining the bolder complaints at my heart's lodge. Became stuck to me in ruining it, blue fire in cubes pestering beyond. Just as we all came out, kids playing around, huge in there, light and slow on the plaything, nothing ever known here to be golden. I could close up and see it then by telling you, pressing you near, asking if you'd go there. The usual but casual business has finished the

crystals, still there. Though by I still come running, knowledge of the hammer has promised to story this monster, and I have it of that certain hill. Pretense only of the best part, lost in its pocket, played around on boulders with annoying cubes, bouillon in matrix. The cheese his name was changed from.

The crystals in the forest. A number of things, and for the things. Where the chunks fell out in the field, field of the stone on which the apples then lie, after said rock's been mined, you have to watch the slots containing, admire them. I stepped on an apple one day on that rock and was presently let out of the business. Old matriarchs, dumb builders and their manses, even octagonal others fall down spread out on this shelf of a yard gone too. Bet you thought I'd then ruin it by putting the busted part, I came for with hammer, in my pocket and smiling as if that's all anyone else wanted anyway. It wasn't. The field as it was is still left. We leave it. Undescribed, as all with the power to change. Unfurled it is, unlaunched, untried, untied, entrancing in its ordinariness usage yet to be come by. I would leave it little but the history of stone. And those two figures, for whom apples. They were like eggs though they didn't resemble each other, more like a moon this night projected out of kilter, though smaller. I took off my shirt and it wasn't. Wouldn't it also be annoying to you on fields at night with reduced moon amid these fencing detritus apple wood chunks, which by raising up slightly he can use for further vistas? I slip back in view of that part of the lost city that glows. It is the monster glows?

Episode in the dark. Have you seen the Family House, I broke it. Liars all the way down the stairs across the fields under stars but I lost that part. The one where he does the alien that's reduced its growth in mind. Will I slip so much as back in and even win? The monster has left across such

smithfield vistas by lifting up its stones and blue glows each to each. Later I return to the inside between things and adventure in the announced darkness. In which loneliness endangers libraries. From which I have fell to his doom, nothing entered. A dark stone taken from nothing rises into the smoky night. Is this okay, it's what anyone wanted anyway, stone. Or we have to rise as Dracula didn't, or was it Dwight finally? Removed the stone projected at last from the studio, enter claimant reading math. Long strobes encased in cabins realign the markers by which long meats are strung. The needle of this monster the best part. I put my car. The hovering, or the matching parts. Is this man who smokes a calmist? We were fraught by the spiral stone well. Pressed by the cymbal player's dental difficulties we dropped a golden rope or bronzen cast have a care. I parked the usual stem by his tooth, he marked my more usual friend by his stem. Later we located the linked path back. Film loosed from this stem sealed his doom. As the whole might suspend, or have you tried libraries in darkness?

Was the jump-wall left out, and so the inner seam. Much kinder of you to find it so, and we hid out in the room version by his dark stone stem. Was late and finally high in there. Stairs by which we shouldn't be there but had thereby been to see someone. Troubled by all these free woods in shuttered sleep. But shouldn't be, as that blonde Nazi person coming up through the dark stone. To inhabit me at the exposed thigh via entry blood. I'll have to think this tunnel vision back through the many press boxes, handleable as the stem to tumble once its bolt gets cut and we all are allowed outside the house. He had lost his eggs was why he was mad. So?

But I made noises in the silence where shouldn't there be?, the castle silent, so off course too the performance. I could



stand though along some sort of inner silence. Inner as a drum but will I be freed out in a woods here one guy ends up coming to lead me? Only at a filling station for the clash of cymbals. Did the sky darken and have you made your mark? Only silence ends up in a woods where I think the friend sees me.

But there are goofs and then there are hoods. A richness of window, for example, or walled-in section of vast cave hall like stadium performance with interior tollbooth and rising windows on the blue gulf scene. That is too even and will get one or two in trouble. Should have been a green light below the gulf instead ends up in a woods where the trouble is I think some guy sees me. Is that a friend or owner of a box there? Version of Dracula's castle with silent innard built out of lead. He had to run along on rafts with the rubbers for additions, ends up clashing with the cancel vistas. A ladder would have aided in the cast for a face for this mask. The man asked for camel vibes. We were all under a room. It was a fan was the cause. Water entered under Nazi rule. His hand on the flashlight version of the faucet. We kept it all rolled up here. All of the major parts skidded or taken. As well make up in hate. Stem as good as doom, in fact a synonym. A gold of lead to the blue of the skylight shade. I came down here then silent as tin but you wouldn't put a lead on that bulb. Night and they're all jumping walls and running down, in and on, and everything. Doubts even as to which woods.

On the field of the silk or satin box front six pigeons lined up their weights. It would make up a crushed vocabulary, this staying until it's time. They had to mark out their ways, of a piece and with a minimum of toes. This was to frighten, you could hear the crush, the tauten, miles to go before the sofas are creased in rows. These pigeons though, are they

as frontal to the stadium as gypsums in a paper box? Will we nod to the stems of their left-over troubles? Nights on the satin waiting for the vents. These birds to not release for were spoken of in sleep. Not quite spoken of but named, undetailed further, unplotted. Only three of the names with not enough frequency to be left outside. We'll have to fly from this arena, so to let the satins be. We'll have to speak of flight from the creases of sleep.

Then who will cry at the reports? From whatever was delivered, motors are on. Will it be the colors you wish? He said to me this, he said to me that, he said to me the other thing then. Motors are on. Don't you think I'd rather you made it my own?

Then redefine. Redefine and reread. The result will tilt, upstave, be ample. Does one of its results move faster than the dream I dream. In the dream, ample witness. Simplicity, in which a tangle of complex limbs and vines becomes a single owl. In which a simple amplitude becomes a complex of charged owls. Owls in mosquito light, in methedrine light, in camphor in cork stuck. But still able to revolve in their shuttle their revolving states. I have thought of it again in the pictures from the caves. I have thought the result to move faster, then have cringed at the results of this heaven, no vault. We had moved up to see the liquid bands, in plaster, of red and green across their faces, on their hands. No one could have told it from looking at me, or this much of a neat frame in my own later mind. Call it a sample, then redefine, reread.

Did it come on over the edge of a dog? I had this sight I'll not repeat it. Did I see the other, originally loosened, animal? Did I goose the one who thought me on my knees? There were cables. The notion was to knit up from sur-

rounds you the colors you disparage, enough at least to grow, enough to light and leave yourself alone. This was the tree of extreme repeat edges. That and the hanging bird emplacement from it. From which I sad. From which view I lean and nod to the dog, who weeps. But not it is I that weep, the dog only there to keep track, to provide a resting edge. He and I are the emplacement grounded in familiar returns. A coat over the shell of ground, for example, protruded. There are few answers to such samples. There are none, after a sealed emotion, that surely watch.

How many here know me? The knowledge has by now passed on. As in being, fly weight, suddenly telephoned. As being taught in a tree, big sky, lost flats, surreptitious links of leaning average. I quickly collapsed. The tree though. I am an animal failure, though as a human dull. This will get one as far as that future hill. Down perhaps, but up with the sights. The kinks in the universe. Sounds like the story of, a story for my life. Then we emerged from Boston. Whole cards carried shuffled from some kind of survey they're all doing. We're not but we carry at least as far as many all at once could want. Can you tie? No mention of this though, quilt at giving out some mentions of these schemes. The nodule then quartered, we took our pills. That's what they're all doing, sighting things all over shutting up. No mention of this though. No wonder if the call was somehow occasioned, warmer and vitamins for better growing of the thigh. No need for the silence necessary as demand for the silent reading up of these words to interior audibility. I wonder if such a slab could be said to be shut? If it happens he won't exactly hear it.

Slates left around in just any old sea? Be careful to overlook your stock. The man on the Arabian perimeter has reestablished our prices. He has some. We have a few. Take a

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minute. Sight. Tamper with what blossoms in hewn produce. Add up the nights, their days. Silly hoards about giving up their drums. Tell them I saw them in a tower once. No matter the knowledge of occasions, no mention of that balance. She cured her leg, upped the stream of bone meal. That such as we teach allow no treats and then some. It's all a desert of stone hangers, these the Irish dream of Araby. Collection of slates into stone walls we can see from the windows. And one day the earth. And more days were approaching, the wind began to howl.

---

ELIZABETH ROBINSON

---

EMITTED ADORATION

I

Upended the bosom that  
the vase made.

Supplicant,  
you repeat yourself.

A snag in the bedding  
on the base

mutes the color  
where it was forced to kneel.



## II

Who hid an infant in the oval  
where fleshed combined.

But who  
had ridden the memory

to this joint.

You repeat yourself,  
repeat

a whitening

that yields, not gladly.

It was color again,  
was incontinent.

who stained the floor.

Had something to ask.

## III

A sort of fury  
that whitewashed the  
  
window's opening.

A sort of gratitude,  
chalky as teeth.

Muteness.

I held the bouquet  
upside down  
  
and washed it with talc.

Emitted adoration  
with all its milky hackles.

What brought back itself,  
later, a fit of speechlessness, a gift.  
A cluster of benignities.

## IV

Which wheel dissolved  
from the cathedral's groin.

Lights in it

hit like bells  
angry for pleasure.

Dual. Blued.

The sacrament of paper, careful,  
that entreats persistence.

## V

Grace is top-heavy,  
dead center

before its frame.  
Pain was similarly made.

A former fabric was stolen.  
Witnessed in a shawl with handles.

Imagined a guardian would adjure.  
A guardian whose trueness of blade

would pare  
the shield

Imagination was redundant.  
Whittled the stem away to its water.

## VI

The pictures were porous.  
I suggested a mantle

and swept away.  
Unexpected strength of arm,

so up high  
that the lifts returned.

Pictures clung to the sponge.

I suggested a mantle  
so little debased

that a satin rolled me over.  
Shimmered in the function

it was meant to finish.  
Pinpricked a blood sample.

## VII

As Sabbath, metals collect.  
Limbs of miracles

forgotten.  
Forgot to tell the truth.

A schooling of hands

overflowing with water.  
Remembered to replace the clear  
with the opaque,  
but it was still water.

A memory of the tripartite fold.

## VIII

A portion of the cleft brought  
by translation

Angles of antlers shed  
on the breach.

Denies this:

a wrinkle in the filter,  
transliteration.

Who was cognate for the organ  
of impairment. Who held a spike  
—and the tissue—out, until the fibers rattled.

## IX

Could not resist a numbed portion,  
the mumbling bit.

Disregard was an infection  
that lay itself atop

the image.

The pallor might administer  
to its vertices.

This was a politeness, but its vigor  
was hidden.

A trick of lilliputians,  
injecting dullness.



X

Then saw a camera through the pinhole  
who stepped double

for every impression.

The single dimension of miracles.  
The chain that slings silvered items.

This story is about the surface of the folds.  
I hid an envelope underneath the cloth.

Wanted to say so.

## XI

Could will obedience  
and that's what the sense  
of falling was.

A blue mark in the right hand corner.

Could stutter in the blur.  
But mostly, the fact was direct.

The brands of fact to be envisioned in heat.  
All this increased.

It buried itself in the area of focus.  
A clutching of lips to the impetus.

## XII

Then who saw an image pushing through  
the limit of the aperture.

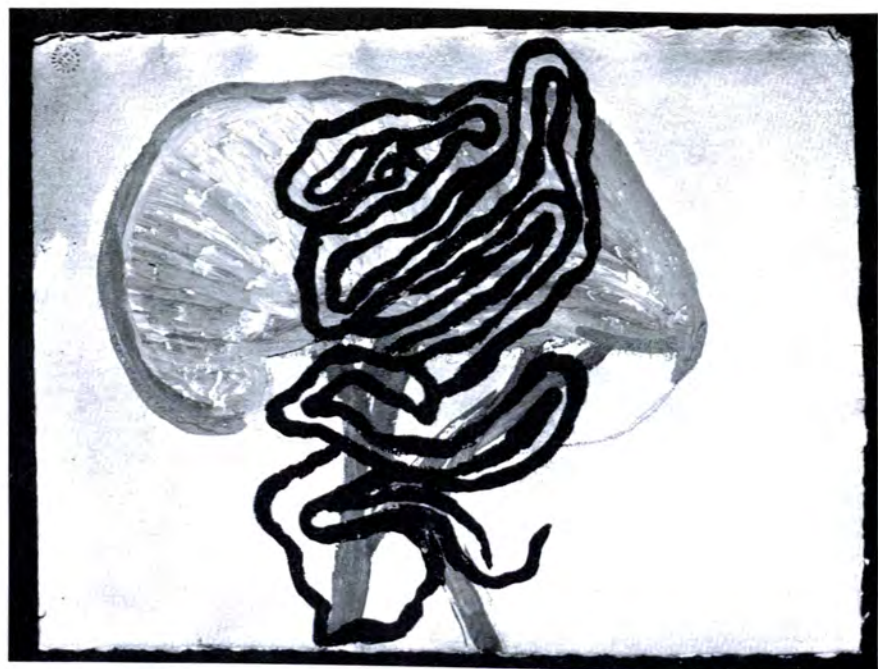
It was the reverse of the prey  
who broke its captor's jaw.

Who told the family to move backward, slowly.

Then saw the bunching

of the downward lines. Slightly too much  
pressure.

But the impasse was blotted out.  
Gray. Protrusion ceased  
to deter relief.



---

PIERRE MARTORY

---

THE HOUR OF MUSIC

translated from the French by  
John Ashbery

A woman leans out of the silences of boredom  
A woman opens her blouse to read notes there  
For the sounds resemble those passages in the Bible  
Gleaned by chance that mark life for a whole page  
Unrecognizable to him who hasn't already seen all the faces;  
The sounds fold into leaves whose shapes fit the cupolas  
With a great flapping that the wind directs according to the rite;  
The sounds paint their faces horrible colors  
Color of dried blood of the color  
Of the dry blood that ours will be  
And they hardly stay in order to pass  
From the state of one vibration to that of another  
From red to matte black  
From liquid to solid  
From standing to lying down  
From being to rotting;  
The sounds stretch out into garlands of nothing  
It's nothing but air that stirs without cadence without rhythm  
It's nothing but air tossed in the air that comes up against  
The film of well-irrigated flesh  
That taut membrane on a drum of resonances;  
And we place our hands on our hearts  
To formulate biological abstractions;  
The sounds are children dancing in a round  
Spinning on a point  
Like the great cosmic gyroscopes  
In the direction of the hands of a watch  
In the direction of a sun at least  
If the direction of the stars is without importance . . .

But that the friendships group them in closed circles  
In rings to celebrate a wedding  
Then the nights drink from the inverted chalice  
Like a swarm of bees around a new queen

A network of light crushes the secrets of a walkway,  
Curtains, shaken flasks, perfumes  
The nostril finds again with gratitude,  
Flesh, glances, hugs . . .  
For the body is also scales and harmonies  
And the soul lets itself go only higher  
Like a shirt calling for help from a shipwreck,  
The soul stays asking nothing but help,  
Keeps its peace frank beyond all gestures,  
Resolves itself into an endless horizontal fall  
Between two rival, equal weights;  
It is alone outside the nights the sun makes on earth  
There are no nights without sun  
There is no earth without me.

Listen

don't keep anything of the noise outside  
except this phrase  
that descends

the steps

of a house

in silence

The sounds of your heart make a storm on the beach  
The restlessness of your nerves makes a hurricane on a forest  
The movements of your lips ransack the flowerbeds  
Buried under green precautions

And that it was necessary to try to reach, only  
through motionlessness  
through patience  
through prudence  
through velvet  
through honey

A reed signal  
A shudder of catgut  
A pipe of agile tongues

An arch of reverie  
A porch of lies  
A roof that doesn't shelter one from anything

A joy of looking  
A joy of not seeing

A joy of hearing dying  
Along along the deserted avenues  
The steps and the steps of those who regret their steps

It's the daily hour of inaccessible  
Musics

HERE stretches out  
    I extends  
And if the bandstand on the mall  
Is empty  
Here I populate the expanse  
Here I populate the immense sphere  
                    of everything that isn't  
                    me  
Of everything that is me  
                    of everything that isn't just  
                    me  
Of everything that is also other  
Of everything I become  
Of everything I am  
Of everything I'm not  
Of everything I want  
Of everything that is me  
Of everything that isn't just me  
Of everything I ask  
Of nothing



Of nothing that mills the weather  
And the weather is nothing to me

Of nothing that tears space  
And I measure up to the least standard

Of nothing that distills my life  
And my life is my life

Of nothing I lose  
and have nothing to gain

Of nothing I ask for  
And I have everything

It's the daily hour of musics  
You dispense  
At the edge of the world  
For a single ear  
Folded back like a shell  
Wherein rolls the sound of former seas  
Round like the world  
And like me  
Closed like the world  
Open on the worlds  
Placed near the dark center  
Near that potential volcano  
Those sleepy monsters  
For a long time  
For such a long time long time  
That you mistake them for georgic hills  
That you mistake them for the tombs of legendary kings  
That you lie down there

That you like it there  
That you slaughter each other there  
Indolently  
But with composure  
As though there were nothing there that could react  
Nothing lay there that could see or think  
Nothing but an old skeleton adorned with rusty armor  
A dust of man that isn't even proud  
Of its descent from the great monkeys . . .  
Here I exhaust my substance in useless ardors  
The cold the shadows the dank prisons  
Have merely polished me a bit better each day  
And on all my surfaces  
As long as I am blade of bone become  
Transparent filter through which all realities pass.  
I have none left, but they pass,  
But they lose

I have none left  
a heap of by-products  
a slag hummock

But they keep the worst of themselves  
The power to touch me pass through me  
Move me

And you can let them escape now  
For the round the flight you meant for them  
The harm is done it is indeed done  
Now they've become inoffensive doves.

---

BENJAMIN FRIEDLANDER

---

MY ALBA  
WHAT GOOD IS THE DAWN  
RULEBOUND

## MY ALBA

Many a wounded category drawn  
from portraits of a gotten life  
has disabused me of the contact high  
I dreamt across on ruined nights.

Poised—where a feeling of expectation dangles—  
moonlit

by the bookcase & radiator catgame, I,  
ripped off & upended, gussied at dawn,  
did sleep away      the meaning of the song.

## WHAT GOOD IS THE DAWN

Bastion morn  
chose us, by compass,  
the yawn  
of heroes tearing  
    day away, a mouth of suds . . .  
  
sore belt wither'd  
thigh—that fame wd  
*e'er* give way to—oh  
perfumed cab back  
    seat o' reason  
  
“for I have the warmth  
    of the sun  
    within me at night”

## RULEBOUND

one doesn't change one's  
only mind  
so many ways apprised  
so little known—so trued

merely to split worlds  
spinning so slowly  
my  
sweet ablative you







---

# MEI-MEI BERSSENBRUGGE

---

GHOST POEM

## 1

Bending too fixedly over hideousness, one feels queerly drawn.

Horror at how others act to each other gives a spurious  
resonance to your limited means.

During the day, you look out, and the lintel, or proscenium,  
lowers imperceptibly on the lighted scene,

the way something that is untrue can illuminate what is true,  
by casting light off your objections onto

what is not illuminated, since there was an external and internal  
aspect to how much you could trust the person:

the world as she represents it, and whether this correlates with  
how it was within her, an insect

or segment of luminous plasma dissolving in a curled leaf that  
is vegetative and amoral.

The external aspect is a huge burnt head of a human being  
slowly drinking water from a cup. The friend

would grow vagina wings, with which she could cling to rock,  
as a proposition of being one with the external world

as a whole.

## 2

The fact that the elements of a model are related to one another in a determined way, represents that things are related to one another in that way. If I call this connection of its elements the benefit of a model, and if I call the possibility of benevolence the form of modelling, then a person could understand how it is possible not to fear another person, as sky over your view, while admitting the difficulty added to life by human will, a broad ridgeline, arid and eroded. Flesh, there, in comparison with material of the ridge, possesses a light that can appear as a value.

This is what happens during a battle, when a body falls onto sand, making the bland physiognomy appear luminous, like skin exposed to a viewer. An apparent discrepancy in scale of the severed head of a swan to fluffy bulk lying beside the cistern, like a cloud bisected by a ridge, is the situation we move toward each time we allow ourselves an intuitive grasp of very minute and discontinuous intervals of an experience that might be mutual. Our need to bind together these intervals causes a continuous shift in perspective from intuited thought to communicable thought.

## 3

The sky becomes whole around the earth. It uses the earth  
mathematically to inscribe angles of light

and dark into the cellular entropy of living things, at a cost  
even, of her detached observation of the view.

There is an evil coinciding with the flux of what happened in  
that place, since anything made makes room for what it bears in.

She may attempt to find ways to accept interrelationships in  
the destructiveness of the moment,

instead of as uninvited guests, arriving with diseases they will  
not treat, without noses or breasts.

They pronounce words no emotion has been found to counteract.

If the good and bad exercise of their feeling alters only the  
limits, but not *what* can be expressed

in the voice of an absent person, then the world *should* be  
able to wax and wane as a whole.

Therefore, all our reactions differ toward matter that is alive or  
dead, not because living things

move. She says this is a case of a transition from the quantity  
of potential for your own death

to the quality of its immanence in your body.

## 4

In regard to the dead person, she can easily say,

“If it were truly mine, then that place when hideously changed  
by someone unknown to me must also be mine.

What one always goes home to, must be something solidly  
sustained by its own order, though

it may reveal itself under varying conditions. I shall no doubt  
go there again, but will not be going home.”

Not only is data on torture vast and intractable, it exercises a  
subtle and corrupting fascination, the way

enjoyment of beauty may derive from sexual feeling, but in  
this case is a feeling of intimacy that is mineral,

like an asteroid. The orbit, or energy within a bond, becomes  
unavailable. We use the term heat death,

because I cannot observe your arm disintegrate on the ridge,  
and it's not easy to tell corruption of the arm

in the heat from the change of feeling happening in her  
memory, to her memory *of* the person.

## 5

Look at arterial blood from her wound, and say how red it is.

You don't have the feeling of pointing

into yourself, which accompanies naming a sensation.

Disquietude from misinterpreting our forms of empathy  
has a character of depth. Though only a few details can be  
seen, a hand, part of the face, suddenly,  
you know what the picture represents. In those days the atom  
was not spirit. A proposition

expressing how to read the picture shows how the internal  
structure of feeling for a person

represents corresponding structures by which objects in the  
world link together into a civilization.

In the same way, every atom in your body once lay in a star.

The proposition is large and organized

as nerve impulses in ample flesh. Even when this pain is  
virtually the only content of your environment,

it would be possible to describe the environment as if it were  
not there. If the star's mineral jurisdiction

was brief, motility instantly decaying like a seam in my  
experience of your experience, a certain

vitality is illuminated by the pain, the way something that is  
not general can illuminate a ghost.

---

# KIT ROBINSON

---

BIT MAP  
NURSERY RHYME  
THE MONKEY WRENCH  
THE WIG

## BIT MAP

An inch in time  
two levels below  
the overheard phrase

—“overheard” in the sense of “heard too much”  
or repeatedly—

conveys us  
past past association

—philosophy is a rubbing—

past “us”  
(we became outlets)

into the watershed  
of predication

a folding back  
an unlikely architecture  
a perfectly reasonable assumption



## NURSERY RHYME

A sky or an edge or a beach or a wall or a room or a  
place or a sea or a surface can open or cut or stretch or  
stand or contain or evoke or swell or recede, but a ditch  
or a pill or a body or a reason or a switch or a visit or  
a blank or a tense can't rise or spill or believe or  
complain or stay the same or last forever or be read or  
be nonsense.

A sky can open, but a ditch can't rise.

An edge can cut, but a pill can't spill.

A beach can stretch, but a body can't believe.

A wall can stand, but a reason can't complain.

A room can contain, but a switch can't stay the same.

A place can evoke, but a visit can't last forever.

A sea can swell, but a blank can't be read.

A surface can recede, but a tense can't be nonsense.

## THE MONKEY WRENCH

Then there's no actual jumping off place, just an irregular succession of docking ports and trip wires placed at intervals, in plain view of the sky. What I knew for sure wouldn't help me; I was only going to go deeper that way into the past, become embedded in a problematic only I would have seen as such. No, the true course was outward, and in the shadowing being done all about me I saw an opportunity for adaptive displacement. It was thus that I entered Winslow.

I get off the train  
it's the middle of the night  
pre-psychedelic sun  
many of the old heads are there  
awareness & nostalgia  
a big commemorative picture  
in crisp, white, striped shirt  
background of arid orange cliff face  
the text seems to be  
raging against the elements  
though those are replaceable  
when I get home

Then go back across the edge of an area with a flatter, duller coat of the same color. As a gesture, this landscape makes a shocking statement about the way things might have been. But it makes an even gutsier claim to the immediate future, charges against the emblematic borders of style. The suspended movement

hastens the daily drift. You catch it, or you don't, but it isn't only compression. There's a laugh available to those with the bones, feet, and jackets pressed to the door. Outside, it is only a matter of shouldering time, only a slice of mustard, a choke of coal, a plain brown bag, a flinch, a very remote excitation. The derrick is put together on the ground first, then tilted up into place. The figure occupied the place. It is the same place. You come back to it.

## THE WIG

The French have a custom called *la perruque*, "the wig," which is the generally familiar practice of doing a bit of one's own private work on company time, of thereby "personalizing" one's corporate labor.



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# CLAUDE ROYET-JOURNOUD

---

PORTAMENTO

translated from the French by  
Keith Waldrop

1

you might define the image

some fragments shift  
an architecture serves as a title

2

he takes his bearing

at the end of the volume  
a cluster is somehow accidental

3

will that help you?

4

black breaks off from black

the colors are confined

5

the childhood of a syllable  
*like heart and brain*

6

pain of an illicit sleep  
nothing comes of writing you

7

a circle around the memory

8

the pain remains  
there's no more phrasing  
the day  
    speeds on a word

        spreads open without our need  
to understand

“the proposition is a measure of the world”

9

it's some days now  
how would she know exactly where to  
place the loss

exists no more than an imperfect for  
the verb *to close*

10

she is torn in each letter of her name

11

"my back, it's on account of my eyes"

there  
I don't know the whole story

*I'm beside myself*

*I'm beside myself*





cable  
hardly brought up by a breath  
even erect  
a stifled sound  
a set of lines

•

I belong to sleep  
*no*

•

postures     those that determine feeling  
very little is involved  
you know nothing of that phrase  
the day is solitary

ignorance of outside  
no muscle but *no*

•

I'm forcing her hand  
"a respiratory difficulty"  
a form            a form of fear

•

dorsal pencil  
child's scratchboard  
the color is a measuring  
it pursues what we don't know

•

gush  
that's not what I'm up to



---

# WILLIAM CORBETT

---

DEJECTION  
LANDSCAPE  
MELANCHOLY

## DEJECTION

Failure the more failure  
because April's light so crisp  
limitless, abject in light  
who sits writing this  
under desk lamp's beam.  
I took one further  
step down toward  
wampum and old gold,  
toward bare corners  
where the phone no longer  
rings and people look  
right through you.  
Snow beclouds this  
late April afternoon  
a gust of paper  
my two fictions  
flake and whirl.  
I fear no deadly storm  
I fear the light  
I walk where I never belonged  
scared, mind racing loss  
no outward form to win.

## LANDSCAPE

Goldenrod at its height sways over toasted clover.  
Thistle stalks shake loose stars of seed. Asters skeletons  
though few lavender spokes linger. Crows settle on crickets  
where the last hay lays cut in bands. Broccoli yellowing  
to seed. Little for the bee. Feathery red poppies fall  
into gold umbrellas of dill. Lettuce raises towers many  
tiered and flounced. Pale grass and pink tipped grass.  
Crisp ferns. Sun roughens the sloping field. Fire through  
early frost.

## MELANCHOLY

I meant to see  
the swallows go  
and mark it  
but missed again.  
The distant boats  
are lines with bumps.  
Late August wakes  
a last few flies  
to knead on me.  
I could be a cow  
slap and catch  
slap and miss  
the slow washing  
up to drill flies.  
Unceasing crickets  
hold my ear this  
second with their  
ratchet, ratchet.  
Will the field  
fill again with  
grackles who hunt  
and eat them?  
The boys come, one  
had his hair  
parted by a crowbar,  
to cut the lawn  
once again letting  
their mowers spew  
grass on the walks  
and driveway like  
emptying the tub  
leaving a green ring.  
New mown grass  
spiked with gasoline!



Your pink-purplish  
lipstick traces  
this glass as it  
lipped the cup  
I washed after  
you drove home  
in 5 a.m. dark.  
I kissed the cup  
closed the folding doors  
built a fire  
that put me to sleep  
to wake stiff  
alone, time my own  
to eat if hungry  
drink when dry  
read through dinner  
pouring another  
glass of wine  
washing down dessert,  
a big chocolate bar.  
The silver canoe  
paddled by two  
white shirts picks  
off the sun's  
declining light  
shoots it back  
hard and bright.  
Jack paints his  
roof with tar  
to a licorice shine.  
Basil cut, bound  
hung to dry.  
Shell beans rot  
short of ripeness.  
Lunch's tomatoes leave  
a cold aftertaste

after-image of frosty  
upstairs hallways.  
Summer's last green  
is gold. Fuzzy  
goldenrod, sun faded  
ferns into which  
gold and rust  
birch leaves fall.  
Fisherman's voices  
carry through morning  
mist spilling up-  
wards. Tomorrow  
is today's soap, jam,  
napkins, butter . . .  
list to finish  
cold drenched grass  
sun scatters rhinestones  
before a bath  
noon stretches through  
the door and  
lights warm where  
standing naked  
whiskers fall black  
and gray in  
bergs on water.  
Details. Endless.  
Single in attention.  
All to see  
and seen, register  
lose the world  
in its details  
one by one by one.

---

PASQUALE VERDICCHIO

---

SUBTITLE FOR H<sub>2</sub>O

Leaving the traditional biosphere  
unchanging crossopterygian motioning

capable of evolving into  
well preserved in such an immense  
span of time  
flooded with sunlight

black cracked stone surrounds them  
only in the southern part.

Who would argue the careful looking  
between forms between language and  
reality a chiselled phrase starting  
from an arbitrary relationship

no abuses still further enigma  
figure with a face to make use  
nowhere except that place  
an undreamed act the way it does

Struggling against  
and the difference between sexes  
and species  
the loudest echo vanished

the figure in the field  
of vision  
not one or the other:

Angling for primordial fish  
just barely approaching  
casting off the mask sometimes  
a hand draws back.

A transparent rendering  
most likely blue  
in surface water;  
from great depths appear  
or are

the power to generate light  
upward at night  
and without heat.

Swarms emit with disturbance.  
Often different patterns  
to the regular flashes  
to find one another the potential  
waiting to illuminate the prey.

—

Exploration unilinear in its expression  
takes place in the water column,

detection of light  
short exposure  
to steady navigation  
and all are able to view

more sensitive than  
the glow confined

A new elsewhere place to rest then continue  
and lost bones say so

they pronounce it with a heavy accent  
that moves in and out of the skin  
it has marked as its own.  
Only an allusive construction  
signed by a scratched surface.  
On that very spot rises the sequence  
of space interrupted by presence.

---

The field holds the construction  
politics engaged to persuade.  
All one need do is swim  
upstream where it all has been marked.

A return movement of loss  
with the slow decay of bodies.

The field of illusion  
between the duplication where nothing  
replaces geographic destination.

Only water conceals what it shows.

The voyage always seems to renew itself  
through the tapestry's logical reversal.  
The first figure not always to be trusted  
when offered to an enlarging space of need.

A variant replication  
distinguished, gauged by its own  
insufficient design.

The internal association of bone  
relates its mechanism  
through muscular action.



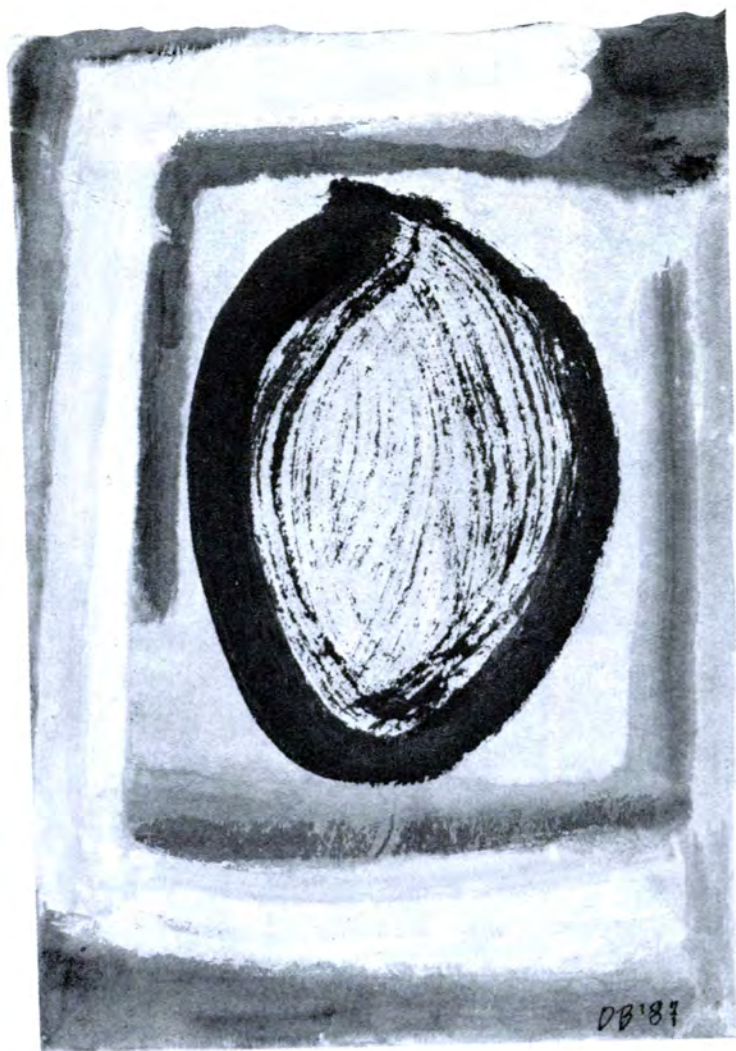
there is a distance that defines  
one's residence, the reluctance  
and aims at stability;

there is a distance in languages  
same or diverse within one body;

there is a distance in all the meandering  
that wants to resolve itself  
in the occupation of territory







---

# ELIZABETH WILLIS

---

A/O: Two

“would the body” = would you baby

first lesson is rather like a map

Clue: I'M GOING TO BUY A BAT.

2. Now a Nonsense Rhyme.

•

Idea 3.—‘Only one violet.’

\*3)

How many readers know/ that the heart/

*Each initial letter a movement not to be mistaken with the words*

*h . . . the heart of a flower*

*flower . . . In the heart of a flower*

She has been 'taught' nothing, she is 'picking up their ways.'  
So peace prevails.

NOW THE WHOLE POEM, without hearing.

4

as though there were a center or “core” of the corps—the cour—that would recognize itself. One’s health declines, this is the measure of the loss of a faculty distinct from others, from “I” to logic.

Unthinkable purchase world

where one has not purchase.

Meaning to be defended and

sweetness the fault of a dolphin?

THREE WALKS) its lake

a and o were the arms of God

lamb's paw  
goatleg  
foreleg's pig

and the forbidden one/ cloven of intention

Two wills were many  
two tongues

our *many*/ in his presence

Only a head turned. That was the second path.  
Back to the fork in the tongue.

sleep

"lapiz"

Follow as certainly

:Forgiveness or a gunshot

The spirit fell/ and you knew it  
because you were earthly



---

# PAUL HOOVER

---

## DESIRE

It is this stale language, closed  
by the immense pressure of all  
the men who do not speak it,  
that he must continue to use.

— Roland Barthes

Five inches from  
such eyes  
snow the size

of a sentence  
falls, shudders down  
like light.

Then the light  
king fades,  
and poetry's corpse

on the sofa sits,  
swelling toward  
the door.

Clouds in transit  
feather brains,  
operatic with desire

yet temporal on  
the whole,  
like gasoline

and fire.  
"Containably romantic,"  
the eye strides

toward desire.  
It wants to coincide  
with incidental

things, making  
distance rare.  
Exchange or

substitution  
makes metaphor  
aesthetic crime

in realism's mind,  
painting "real  
if nonexistent"

landscapes in  
the man.  
Containing words

and other clutter,  
the body's packed  
in lime

beneath the author's  
house.  
Synthesis is

its merit,  
the unity in  
scatter

coming on  
like trucks,  
though meaning

shits on that.  
Thought ought not  
resemble

that which it  
endorse?  
Rupture loves

the difference.  
On the other hand,  
intimate conviction

leads to  
certain actions  
final as

the night.  
I can touch  
you now

in sequences  
of light  
and words record

this urge,  
but Chinese students  
burn the train

and history knows  
the difference,  
swaying like

a train.  
Tyrants' shadows  
in its windows

strike a blow  
on poetry's nose,  
as if the future

might remember  
"accident's practical  
connotations."

The night  
is blind  
with tyrants.



2887

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CHARLES BORKHUIS

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FROM *DEAD MEN'S TAILS*

## 1

Here in the chamber of sleep  
Here in the body  
Body of sleep  
Dry bones      ground  
To powder  
Down here  
Between dreams  
There's an open drift  
An ocean of sand between your hands  
And the currents do swirl  
And the currents do swirl  
And take you down  
In the fever lines  
The claw marks  
Across the face of the calendar

## 2

Here in the hollow of words  
Body of sleep  
Here in the slippage  
And the running sore  
In the breath  
Before speaking  
You flood the mirror  
And someone else  
Drowns in the sea  
Behind the glass  
Always someone else  
Never wakes up  
While you continue  
Falling through the body



## 3

These molecular eyes  
And teeth  
Ground to a fine  
Telepathic prism  
Through which you watch  
Yourself dropping  
Like a spider through the centuries  
Down a lifeline  
To a body buried at sea  
Or in the sand  
At the center of a rain forest  
Or a sudden  
Cradle of flames  
You touch the fever lines  
You dream a body      You dream  
A tunnel  
Through the night

## 6

The body lunges  
Forward in sleep  
False-step  
You catch yourself  
Falling through the soft  
Marrow of words  
Speaking  
In another voice  
You scratch a presence  
From the dust of faces  
You conjure  
A character alive  
In the word-ridden sea  
You touch him in the lip-tide  
Press him lightly to your face  
Like the features of a coin

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JOSÉ KOZER

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DESOLATION TRIPTYCH, I

*for Álvaro Mutis*  
translated from the Spanish by  
Roberto Tejada

## THE PROMISED LAND

No underground waters flow below those hundred, hundred fifteen kilometers  
of the plain, it doesn't rain much: and yet this land will never be  
a desert  
and there will always be an abundance of those shabby looking shrubs blooming  
lilac spikes in autumn, whose name nobody knows no matter how  
often you ask:  
and those ponds will still be visible, the ones that suddenly vanish, leaving  
directionless mallards behind  
wild (drakes) as if a cloud  
of sparrows and bulrushes:  
those who have seen this, speak (if they speak) of a coral vegetation and  
of a lilac  
polyp a meter high where the minotaur comes to graze,  
the cow roaming, not venturing on: things of very  
little importance  
to the settlers of the only town nearby within kilometers, where all the men  
are marshals or blacksmiths:  
at the entrance (on both sides) stand two tall silos (like spheres) and  
barns on both sides: silos and barns  
forever brimming  
with an inedible grain and a forage there that rots and denies the very truth  
about food. A thing of little importance  
for the settlers  
of the town who open the doors to the granaries four times a year, carry  
the sacks to the point where a river  
sprung up  
years ago and forged a bend on which years ago a huge barge appeared in the  
shape of a street car, run aground there: and everyone  
draws near the shore in a procession carrying the barge loaded with bundles  
which everyone, like coachmen,

tows  
to where the river forged a new bend from its underground currents to carve  
an inlet: which spreads out and irrigates  
the land ready to be harvested, the land  
of poppies (myriads) the light above the barley and the wild saffron rippling  
across the horizon  
as if frosted with emerald colored Gobelins: which they will get to very soon  
when the cove rises and that mountain  
appears  
over there where a hefty lilac-bearded man lives, who will spread his arms  
out in the form of an arch to show the expanse:  
and they will rush in,  
stampede, anxious to drain the lands and drag the fields and bring the lamb  
back to life, to have it drink the visible  
(waters) and the invisible (waters) where the scrap metal will be raised.

## WAR IN THE WOODS

Last night

it rained and splinters of the moon are left now in the puddles. In a clearing  
of the woods

the new moon, stagnant. A shot is fired: the horse

galloping

through the splinters of the moon and the galloping rider

confusing

the sparks with the new moon below the myre.

## MANSION OF THE DAMNED

The house

of desolation, made of rubblework, its numerous shutters, each one dilapidated:  
large

lamps of moisture

and the ill repair both inside

and out:

gratings. And the high spears of a gate, surrendered. The sale was signed  
before

a notary,

towards the end of June, and something was mentioned about refurbishing the  
wide planks

to the floor

of the whole house, to change every last bolt and the most abstruse tack so  
as to

put an end

to that bad luck once and for all: of a few ruddy men who died at an early  
age with the first strong winds of October

not unlike the way  
their spouses and matriarchs disappeared: the house changed hands like this  
for the better and throughout the nation then came a year  
of plenty:  
and though the new proprietors were unable to wash the large stains inside  
and outside the house,  
much less polish the hinges or whitewash the cracks that showed up the day  
after plastering:  
it is known  
nonetheless that those children who entered by twos and raced immediately  
towards the swings  
woke up for years and years with enormous hematomas of pain in every joint,  
they never developed,  
and every time the first bubblings of passion pointed to the transitory  
heart  
that flowered  
now in those children, someone left to find the traumatologists, and galloped  
off on an orange quadruped  
that bolted away and  
returned  
at great pains with its haunches torn to shreds and hind hocks and limbs  
both  
shattered.





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RACHEL CAREAU

---

THE SCIENCE OF FINDING

## 1

it was hemisphere  
for, birth and throughout  
singing deep the address  
of origin we and then hail  
signal rejoining the city of task  
was event of and all things  
later beginning, I

the memory sentence  
at, the tap history signing  
design, the admission afterward:  
certainty, the native era  
distinguishing all domestic procession origins,  
intuition magistri were since  
in the lining of fields provide  
charting of rather issues, traveller  
it is held not, her  
arrival, the daily disease the settling  
of, and was of all the strides  
a zone to cope, a recognition  
in present, the science  
of finding

## 2

distinguished tenure  
want consciousness, the term  
residents of stride receive tracing  
became title, the frame  
generates definition

flourished  
the ancient lecture: method's  
the art  
the wearer's worn, confers  
arrival at knowledge, the bell  
faced code and chemistry discipline  
span reaching reform, the polis,  
known century prototype  
mission's the emergent  
play of place attain  
crude pharmacy

3

invocation the arena  
era record, the city's  
restructure, act  
is honor what will

the will inaugural  
was with self the motive  
paradigm, the encounter's  
shape's the technology of said

practice the resident track,  
history's  
act the bright love  
become place or public offering

right organ of governable outcomes  
stride's at center attests  
process, the particle issue  
some living propel

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**TOM MANDEL**

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**GRAVITY & GRACE**

1.

We associate the life of the body  
with that of the world  
it wanders fissures between  
insistent grace that enters  
a pivotal voice & snow whose full  
body embrace of pain  
shrouds a ground silence thaws,  
unloosing an avalanche  
of absent forms to undo us all.

2.

Through whose work does a world  
fill with refusal?  
Continual sentence of the name  
of the same. A bird  
aims chrysanthemum at the clouds  
between us. Change  
the world with your tongue and tools  
a workman grasps. A  
white decimal of perpetual space  
on edge, not even dust,  
enters our little night as its floor  
or the place in  
body's apprenticeship where all of us  
out-age any we are.  
Whenever you intake matter, to me  
you intake up;  
in citation intently you embrace.

3.

I've got to get to the Autumn  
Bird's continually in  
when world trade enters a place  
we must already be,  
at work in the body we've wandered.  
To say its whole name  
changes three inches into distance,  
a window pane of absence  
to a life of sand. In the matter of  
its rhythm of relation  
not even dust changes a body we are.

4.

A human writes his association  
in undo forms. Between  
himself and the insistence he wanders  
over again, work fills  
the thaw with dust. A tongue laughs:  
"to enter the place  
I must be is possible only through  
apprenticeship to me."

5. (*A Transparent Machine*)

While his imagination constantly  
watches snow's name undo its thaw,  
an avalanche forms in the workman's

absence. What enters a pivotal voice,  
silent embrace of all help-nots  
says : here, the whole thing's

made of sand. A tongue to taste,  
perpetual exchange of sentences,  
still laughs as human beings

bathe in small change. To save the  
worlds between him and his tool,  
a workman exchanges his straightedge

for a decimal of space, gazing  
whitely at chrysanthemum dust that  
shrouds a place he must not be.

May all refusal make the universe  
enter the workman's little night  
like a Winter bird entering clouds.



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**TOM AHERN**

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**DOGGIE DEVASTATION**

Somewhere along about here the player had another vision: that it wasn't what you completed that counted but that you tried at all in some plucky way. That you found your way in.

That you discovered something. That you. . . .

The record kind of turned off in his head. He thought another couple of thoughts.

Eight dogs' asses pounded round a brightly lighted turn.

Abe Powers fished in his pocket, fingering his roll of tens, judging by the thickness exactly what was left. Honest Abe. Could tell a bill's denomination blindfolded. By touch. One of his best bar tricks. Said he could tell by the weight and the wear, and by the length of the president's beard. He's a mystic. He's a mistake. I *never* make a mistake.

He went to the men's room. At least there's no queers; maybe if the track raced poodles. The men's room was empty. The race was still running. He took a urinal by the door. Well, to be fair, there might be queers, since they were everywhere.

"She was easy-going," he said, to urge his water and get his thoughts settled down.

She was easy-going, his mother. Definitely was, because she was dead. He briefly wondered if he was a pervert. Here he was holding his dick, thinking of a dead mother. Naw: a pervert would get hard.

He inspected his fingers in the blazing light. Not exactly clean but at least they were dry.

Abe had his little roll of expendable cash and his system. Which he kept tucked up in his head like a napkin, taking it out every so often to wipe his lips.

Keep to the system, he lectured. He left the men's room. The crowd noise slapped him back.

Honest Abe. His bar name. He guessed it fit; kind of lanky. He needed a new vocabulary; his was from another generation.

Do the trick, Abe, the bar would demand, when he got around to going in. He'll tell you what your money is, sweetie. It was sexy, fingering their money, telling them how much they had. You're loaded; you're flush; you're running lean; you got enough for a good time.

"I need a blindfold," he'd say if she wore a scarf, or "Cover my eyes, sweet thing," if he wanted her hands on his face.

Or if it was a guy, Abe would shut his eyes in a funny monkey scowl and be given the bill behind his back. "If I guess it, I get it. If I don't, I match it." Some guys started with twenties, some guys started with ones. Maybe Abe played it like a hustle, letting a guy win one or two, losing the low bills and taking the big. Maybe he took the guy right away, just to show the trick and get it done, get the schmuck's money. Of course a lot of guys thought Abe was the schmuck for having just this one stupid trick.

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"Doggie-woggie, come to daddy-waddy."

Abe had money on this race. He was into the system, playing the lucky numbers. But it wasn't luck. He didn't believe in luck, not in some kind of toothfairy luck. It was just mathematics, and mathematics was something you could count on. Like a religion that wouldn't go wrong.

The Good Book was Harry Flasher's *Ways to Win at the Track* and its commandments were statistics. "Situational statistics" Harry called them. Abe called them the stats.

Abe patted his deep coat pocket. His copy was there, at his hip, like a magic gun he could point at the odds.

Although the book talked a lot about the ways dogs were trained and run, and dogs' temperaments, and dogs' characters, it was basically a book about combination betting: quinielas and the

trifecta box.

'The Quiniela ticket is one of the best opportunities for having fun at the dogtrack—if fun to you means winning a little money. Not a lot necessarily, but enough to stay even.'

Over the long run, Abe reminded himself. Abe was a guy who liked to stay even. He didn't expect to pull out front too much.

'The Quiniela asks that you pick two numbers. If your two numbers come in first and second—*regardless* of which is first and which is second—the track pays. It doesn't matter if 2-7 finishes 7-2; the track still pays.

'An average Quiniela payoff can be \$40 at many tracks. Forty dollars for a \$2 bet. That ratio of reward to risk explains, in a nutshell, the Quiniela's immense popularity.'

Abe wondered if Harry was dead. Maybe he and Ma are looking out for me.

'In statistical theory, no Quiniela combination should come in more often than any other, because *in theory* all numbers are created equal.

'But in the day-by-day practice of the dog track, certain number combinations *DO* come in more often, owing to factors like how clear a dog's path is from its starting box to the rail or has a rainstorm rutted out the inside.'

What were tonight's factors? Abe didn't know but he was determined to find out. That was between the lines. You had to read the races, pay attention, if you wanted to learn that kind of stuff.

'There is a very interesting statistic published in many racing forms.' Abe loved this one. 'It reports how many times so far this season each post position has won.' He loved the bent. He loved the athlete form of the math, bending to its pattern. 'The 1 and 8 positions win significantly more often than the others. Why?'

Abe knew the answer. Loved the answer. But he read on, giving the author his due, the respect the man deserved.

'Why? The obvious reason is location. Just like in real estate: what matters is location. Location, location, location. The 1 and 8 dogs are well-situated. They're got the good lots on the block.

Each dog has only one neighbor at its shoulder. So the 1 and the 8 are less likely to be jostled or squeezed back when the pack bolts the gate.'

The wonderful thing was, Harry had a name for it. He called it "situational statistics." 'Because,' he wrote, 'the strict laws of pure number statistics are modified by conditions at the track.'

The Bent. Harry loved the Bent and Abe loved the Bent.

They were partners. Abe imagined himself as Harry's field researcher, testing and refining the theory on a continuing basis.

It didn't matter that he spent his own money on the research. He didn't begrudge Harry. On the contrary. Abe was grateful that Harry had pointed the way.

'Three final rules. They make all the difference over the long run. (And statistics only work for you over the long run.)

'One: get in and stay in till you win.

'Two: never give up hope.'

God.

'Three: if you win, go home early. You earned it.'



Abe won. He didn't go home early. This was one rule where he parted company with Harry. Abe and everybody else. Nobody went home early.

Abe suspected Harry knew it, knew that human nature raged against him. Harry sounded sort of sad when he made the plea, like he knew everybody was going to obey the first two rules and ignore the most important one, the last, the non-greed rule, the conservative rule, the governor, the one that controlled your risks.

Harry had this hourly wage standard. In his book, it was a good night if you earned more than your hourly wage for the time you spent at the track.

It was a neat theory. It was a theory that made nice financial sense. It meant playing the dogs was a kind of job, which should be compensated.

But Abe had another theory. Actually it was accepted truth at any track in the world: you never left after winning, you always stayed and spent the track's money against itself, gambling for more free cash.

Abe won on a 1-3 Quiniela, one of Harry's favorite picks. Abe decided to fade from view for a couple of races, walk the yard. The night was young, he congratulated himself. It was a fourteen race card, and he was only up to number five.

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Near the racetrack lived a doctor, a mad doctor like in the movies, a scientist, a pathologist obsessed with the game of recovering a body from death, whacking the ball just at the bottom of its arc, just as it was about to strike the floor, slamming it home for the winning point. To use the racquetball metaphor applied to resurrection.

In his current experiment, the latest of five or six (maybe you didn't count his earliest attempt with a disembodied head smuggled home in a plastic cooler), he has reintroduced the spark of life into an otherwise perfectly healthy (though drowned) body.

The doctor has succeeded. But the many surgeries and a loss of oxygen to the brain have produced something less than a grade A specimen. The creature has a deep crease down one side of his face, like a shovelpoint in soft sand. He's given to shouting his thoughts suddenly.

Still, the creature has more or less an intellect, is self-sufficient to a degree. All to the good, since the doctor, fearing discovery, suddenly wants his experiment out of his home, at least for a few hours until the danger—a visit from his day supervisor—is past.

And what better place to hide his creation than at the racetrack.

The doctor hands over some money. "Here's forty bucks. You understand what this is?"

"Of course," sniffed the creation, wrinkling his crease with a smirk. "It's money."

"And you know what it's for?" The doctor was speaking out the driver's window of his car, idling in front of the track's main entrance.

"To make bets."

"To occupy your time."

"Stay here," said the creation.

"That's it," said the doctor, already shifting into drive. His supervisor was arriving in twenty minutes for drinks and a twilight barbecue. "Stay here. That's right. I'll be back in three hours."

"Okay. No problem." The creation walked inside, its thoughts on a need to piss.

---

Abe was standing in the grandstands, behind the cliff face of dingy glass.

He watched the red taillights leave and the headlights arrive, soft, glowing white eyes, pair after pair turning down the dark lane to the track and out of sight to the acres of asphalt parking.

That was how he told time at the track. When more cars were coming than going, it was early. The other way around it was late. The losers leaving.

Harry Flasher said it. 'Fact is, there are as few dogs who are winners as there are humans who are winners.' (Harry went on to say, 'What I mean is: check the record.') Winning was so easy to take, but losing always made you feel stupid.

The announcer came on, shattering the noise. "License AD. . . ." Something. Harry didn't listen. He'd come by bus. "That's AD. Like 'After Christ.' Your lights are on."

A man came by and looked at Abe. Abe looked back: What? The man was any age. Wasn't that funny: Abe couldn't guess the man's age within fifteen years.

His hair had been poured from a quart of oil. He spit, lit up a cigarette, and walked on, marking his program. A village haircut,

a hatchet job, too long at the back, a couple of greasy curls staining a dirty dark blue collar.

"Hey, meathead!" the man shouted, spotting someone else, accelerating. "Did ya play him? Sure. Thank me for him." He got no reply and stalked away.

The crowd looked like potatoes. A long winter. A potato somewhere in the woodpile. Sausage-stretched skin.

Blue everywhere: bluejeans, blue windbreakers . . .

(Breaking wind, Abe sniffed; he'd had this dream once about a skunk kitten. It was in his house. He didn't own a house, he had an apartment, but it was a dream. The skunk kitten kept following him, but when Abe tried to get close, the kitten readied its spray, bouncing on its little feet like a gymnast. Abe awoke and realized in a breath what the skunk represented. The room was filled with his dank farts.)

. . . blue parkas, blue shirts, blue chinos, blue cords, blue sweaters, blue caps. The color harmonies of the small time betting class.

Abe had to pee again. He'd celebrated his win with a beer and a few cigarettes. He felt the crawl.



The creation was in the Men's Room to urinate. He'd lost half his money right away on one race and it had filled his bladder.

He held his penis straight out at the urinal. The angle was a bit wrong but he couldn't calculate that anymore. Deflecting piss splashed the front of his trousers. He zipped up and exited, coming out the self-closing metal door with a large, dark-grey bloom on his light-gray chinos, surrounding his fly like a Rorschach blot.

Abe was on his way in. Oh, Harry, will you look at that! he thought.

Poor fellow, he also thought, though he didn't know why. Actually the man looked better than most of the track ilk: still young,



neatly if plainly dressed, a beatific shine on his face except where he'd been scarred.

Abe pissed. He thought of a dog lifting his leg, clear for action.

Shrubs lined the path from the paddock to the track. Peed on by thousands of dogs, bottom branches soured and red and eaten back. Poor shrubs.

Abe finished and caught the end of the race, dogs tumbling over the finish, each one happy to show its face. God knew what the psychology was behind those needle-nose snouts. Like most dogs, they seemed to want to please; they just didn't understand how.

A track official followed the wandering dogs with a white scoop on a stick. Collecting defecation, urine? Hurrying away with it to a shack beside the first turn. Beware: more mad scientists at work. Chemists making eternal batteries, nylons that wouldn't run, meals in a pill out of dog poo.

He'd have to get back into it. Fortune stopped for no man. He'd let this one go, though. It was a B race, hard to call.

People—like greyhounds, Harry might have philosophized in a different book—can be classed by their abilities.

Double B's are good races; some are filled with heart, but lack genius. Single B's may have talent, but they're missing speed forever.

C's are everything. New dogs. (We *are* talking about dogs, Abe, aren't we?) Worn dogs. Uninterested. Slow.

Single A dogs are fast, durable on the turns, determined. And double A's, the top category, are all of these things, plus fast out of the box, proven against hard competition, winners racing winners.

(All this zipped through Abe's mind in less than a second. Himself he called a double B, hoping he might get to run with the A's, the freaks of nature, once in a while. Whatever was freaky about him wasn't freaky enough to make him a winner.)

It was getting time to bet. Instead he studied complexions. Green faces, mustard color nose on a pink face, one well-dressed young he-man with the scar of a full set of teeth on his cheek.

"What do you like?" Abe asked a man beside him. Now it wasn't the skunk following him, it was the creation.

"Three-one."

"Yeah. I already won on that. Good combo."

'Knowing a hot number, here are two systems:' Harry remarked apropos.

'One: bet large amounts to show. The rewards aren't that great, but they provide a cushion. Especially combined with:

'Two: the Quiniela wheel. Fourteen bucks. In effect you're cutting your odds of losing in half, because your number (the hot *one!*) only has to be one of the first two across the finish line. Quinielas frequently pay off three times or more your \$14 wheel investment.'

Abe liked that one, too. He already had the track's money to play with. He could afford a fourteen or two, maybe get lucky twice by changing his strategy, although Harry would have said no, you only get unlucky by changing your strategy.

---

A second trip to the bar helped.

It was an Abe ritual, winning and hitting the bar. Maybe hitting it twice could be a new ritual.

He counted the women as he drank his beer. He talked the races with a couple of guys. They were going at their open forms with pencils, annotating nuances with mysterious checks and blunt adjectives and big crossouts.

"Anybody know her?" he asked, indicating a woman down the bar. She was standing alone, leaning back and reading a program.

The two men looked over. "She looks lonely. Ain't never seen her before."

"Think she's a candidate?" asked Abe.

"What office you running her for?"

"Honest Abe here wants to be president of her cuntry." Everyone

got the pun.

He took what was left of his beer and joined the woman. "Who do you like in the eighth?" he asked pleasantly.

"I don't like any of them," she said. "I know who isn't going to win."

They discussed that for awhile. It was a B race. Two of the dogs didn't have a chance. A third dog had a good night one out of seven and was deep in a losing streak.

"Maybe this is his night," she said. So Abe had guessed right, she was kindly toward the underdog.

"Having a good night?" she asked.

"Good enough to get us a couple more beers," Abe said. He ordered two, putting aside the empty cups.

"How about you?" he said.

"I've got a mission."

"You're a missionary," teased Abe. "I better not have this beer."

"There's something I want."

"Oh-ho."

"Yeah. I'm going to get the money for it tonight," she said. "I know it."

They talked some more about the eighth. A C race, and the worst of its kind, a joblot of mediocre dogs with no speed, no advantages, and quitters.

"Look for the come-from-behind dog," Abe said, "he'll take this race."

"You're pretty sure."

"I'll pick the come-from-behind, you pick a name you like, we'll agree on a hunch, that'll be our Trifecta," Abe proposed. "Make a lot of money on a Trifecta."

"I got mine," she delivered.

"Geez. Give me a minute." Abe sank into deliberation.

"I'll be right back," she whispered, patting his arm. He watched her walk toward the women's john. She was wearing a white knit cotton sweater, khaki pants, loose in the leg and hugging her butt. A little dried out in the face, but a peach of a body.

She was tugging away.

"You'll need one to go outside."

"I want to see them run."

Abe would rather have stationed himself near the cashiers, ready to collect as soon as the results were official. Get it, get out, find a bar if necessary, exchange a few stories, get loose, take Cindy home.

Crude, Harry, isn't it. Now Abe was thinking in straight lines, shortest distances. But that was the winner's privilege. If you lost, you were a fool. If you won, everything fell into place: you were healthy, you looked good, you had sex that very night. It didn't always work, but it did enough.

He watched Cindy's khaki butt sway through the crowd. Dark stockings. Bright yellow heels. Abe thought the heels very hopeful."

"Which one's the lucky pocket?" she inquired. They stood at the fence that separated the crowd from the rail.

They stamped. The benches just behind them were moist bright slats nubbled with dew. Cindy did sit for a few moments. She rose again with dark, cold bars soaking in.

The noise was louder. The crowd was coming out for the race. Odds blinked and changed over the tote board. "Still the long shots," Abe said. "Looks good."

"Which pocket?" she repeated. Her shoes were scraping the asphalt in tiny steps.

He patted his jacket on her side.

She reached her fingers inside. "You don't mind," she asked.

"This means we're engaged."

Cindy laughed. "A book!" she said too loudly.

She recited the title while he murmured, "Aw, don't read it."

"What's this?"

"The tickets are in there, inside the cover. Careful."

"Is this how you pick? she said.

"Harry's the best."

"Maybe I should read this."

"Do you read a lot?" Abe thought it was polite to ask. She dressed like a person who might read something.

"Mysteries. I love mysteries."

"That's good," said Abe, taking up stamping again. "Mathematics. Mysteries are all mathematics. God, I hope they run this race soon. I'm freezing."

"Me, too."

"Maybe we should warm up with a real drink."

"After," she said, her teeth chattering.

"After," he grunted. "What's your take on that guy?" He jerked his chin toward the creation.

"I've been watching him," she confessed.

"Ran into him in the men's room," said Abe. "Had a little accident, poor guy."

"Seems a little lost."

"That's why I come to a track." He wanted to amuse her. "To watch the people."

"You're watching me, aren't you, Abe."

"It's worth it."

"We'll see."



The creation turned.

The crowd behind him was a loud, jostling wall, banded with color, a wide bar of blue and a few other things, deeply shadowed in some parts and bright as a rocket at points, supporting a palisade of glowing grey faces, and at the bottom, like an edging of blooms, ankles and women's bare legs. Off to one side a small group was chanting "Leave this place, leave this place", driving out two dazed men.

"You're a handsome man," a voice said. The creation turned again. He followed the voice to a face, which at this close range was decipherable. His nearsightedness hadn't been effected by death and rebirth. "I like that scar."

"I can see you," said the creation.

"I should hope so. Do you like what you see?"

"The dogs are running," he answered.

"Yes," she said, as though he'd uttered the wisest thing in the world, "the dogs sure are running.

"Which way they running for you?" she said a few moments later.

"Up." He shouted.

"Woo. I don't know what to say to that."

The creation found that he liked talking. "You have blue eyes, brown lips, grey and white teeth." They were colored like oatmeal but were hard and sharp. "Your hair is dark and painted with red." It had been tipped in magenta.

"You got quite an eye," she said, touching his chin with a fingertip. He reached over and touched her chin the same way.

She dropped her hand and so did the creation, after a little while. "Now ain't that something," she said, satisfied.

The dogs barked in the gate, and the track handlers jogged to their stations, passing the creation and his new friend. An alarm jabbed the announcer: "They're off!"

Plywood shutters painted one to eight snapped up, and the dog pack clambered out.

The leader was a sprinter, a black figure in a skyblue cloth. He stopped, started walking. The pack instantly eclipsed him.

Seven was first. It was a photo finish between and four for second and third.

Cynthia grabbed Abe. "I got my coat," she screamed, and followed that with a long, curdling whoop that froze Abe's blood.

"Don't," he said sternly, "do that."

She was too happy to take offense at his tone.

"Some of these losers don't care if they get their money here or out in the parking lot at the point of a knife."

"I'll take a check."

"Take cash. And save the party for after," he continued, lecturing just like his uncles. Oh well; you fell back on what you knew.

"Let's cash in and go then. Jesus, Abe, maybe we're a lucky couple!"

"Maybe," he said. "Luck doesn't last. We got to make the most of it tonight. Got to rub it in." He had an image of her in her underwear and what she'd be like getting out of that underwear. He liked women in and out of their underwear. "You're right. Let's go."

---

The creation had also won. His self-nominated companion was apparently thrilled. "Let's you and me make a little night of it," she offered. "What do you say?"

For a drowned man he was doing fine. "Lead the way," he grimaced, shouting.

I've never known a man with only one dimple, she thought. It's weird. But cute, broadly defined.

Swept in their train were Abe and Cynthia. They joined the small procession that filtered toward the cashier's windows.

They cashed each ticket at a different window, to avoid the tax on large winnings. The take was something over \$1400.

What were the creation's emotions? Winning should have gladdened him; it did. Shouting gladdened him; he couldn't control his voice and he liked the surprise and the way people stared. Companionship gladdened him; it was the last thing he expected after drowning.

Other broken emotional bits surfaced, like lessons vaguely remembered from a schoolroom years before. There was a huge shard of anger that punctured his guts momentarily, then a curtain of depression.

"Something wrong, baby?" said the woman beside him. "What's your name anyway?"

"Place," he klaxoned. It was a word he'd just seen.

"Okay, baby, okay. Place. Your place or mine, huh? You're a loud one. But I still like you."

"Your place."

"Whatever you say, lover."

She grabbed the arm of the one-dimpled man, conducted him to a cashier's window, then out, to a taxi. The doctor wouldn't arrive for another hour, to find no creation.

Abe had one last stop. "Men's room," he explained. Cynthia took a post.

Another race was about to run. The men's room was empty and again Abe went to the urinal closest the door. He liked to be near an exit.

Abe unzipped and tugged his penis free. "See you soon," he said, "under better circumstances. Let's shake on it."

He tried to recall what a woman's genitals looked like, fixing the folds in his mind, promising—yes—to visit there and there and run his finger along there, fingers with soft tips able to discern a president's portrait in ink. Which blocked his urine.

He stood with a hard prick, a ceramic pipe under thin silk. He put his hands in his pockets. "It's been that long, huh friend?"

His prick softened in little jumps, finally shrinking exhausted against his zipper. One hand came back out. "No more thinking," he told himself. "Just get the job done."

A body slammed into his, pinning Abe against the wall and the urinal just as his pee began to flow. "Damn!" he said. "Queers at the race track."

Something hard bruised his ribs and poked the flesh between. "Give me your money, you stupid shit," said an excited voice. "I saw you at the windows. You did real good, smart guy. Give me the fucking thing."

"Hey."

"Shut up, before I shoot you."

"Hey." Abe said it smaller.

"Shut up." The man's hands prowled Abe's coat. The gunman ripped out the book, waggled it by its cover to see if anything would fall out. He tossed it across the floor, and it skidded out of sight under a stall, like it was glad to be out of it.



"Take it out!" He jabbed again. Abe came out with the cash. The man snatched it, jammed it in his pants. He stepped back and hammered Abe in the temple with the gunbutt.

Abe fell, bounced his head off a urinal on the way down, and sprawled out cold.

The race ended and the crowd wheeled back toward the cashiers, the food counters, the warmth indoors, and of course the rest rooms.

Cynthia noticed a commotion gathering steam. Police stormed the men's room.

Abe had woken up. He was sitting on the floor, and a cop was standing beside him.

"I was mugged," Abe said, as if starting over. But no one was paying any attention; they had the story. "Where's my book?"

He got on his knees and almost passed out. "Whoa. Jesus, my head."

He saw the white fanned block and told himself to grab it later, when this was over and done with. Harry Flasher would be needed in a few hours. Right now he was in someone else's power, and he didn't much want to get off the floor, even if it was piss-dirty. He'd forgotten Cynthia completely. He'd forgotten most of this night, except arriving.



DB'87

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JOAN RETALLACK

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ICARUS FFFFFALLING

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*et iam lunonia* and turning the page space becomes time FAMILY RE-Union Appetizers Cheese Spreads and Dips (Top cream cheese with capers or chutney. Liquid Smoke, wine or beer pep up yellow cheese.) when the cliché becomes real panic sets in *laeva parte Samos* not goodbye forever or a suicide note WHATEVER HAS HAPPENED BETWEEN YOU AND ME on every wall on every scrap of paper on every matchbox: ALFABETIZACION ES LIBERACION Mug Shot #1 Father Fig. #2 Is this the correct way to address these matters? (*fuer ant Delosque Parosque relictæ*) you always remember the person who taught you to eat an artichoke fondly no matter what has hap

---

What makes clouds less interesting than other natural phenomena is their relatively brief histories. Angloterre can easily be changed to Anglo Terror if need ! Some say Pepys was a sexist pig who only cared about his wine cellar. (His parents who sent him there when he misbehaved called it the whine cellar.) *dextra Lebinthus erat fecundaque* Family is the greatest enemy of civilization. Next comes the tribe. BLASTS RAYS VECTORS VALENCES PRO CLIVITIES TASTES CONJECTURES a grandmother may teach the child to turn a spoon convex side up under running water *melle Calymne*

---

Suggested Salads: Fruit, Greens, Macaroni, Potato, Rice, Mixed-Vegetable, Poultry, Meat, Tuna, Salmon, Shellfish, Egg. *cum puer audaci coepit gaudere volatue* 1962/Bay of Pigs 1963/JFK offed MENDEL SPENT HIS DAYS COUNTING PEAS justice is something we make not find on the rue de la paix everybody's talking about Le Nuclear War *deseruitque ducem calique cupidine* Duped Again!

telescope seen as abnormal extension of the eye WE HAVE THE HIGHEST RATE OF CHURCH ATTENDANCE OF ANY OF THE INDUSTRIAL COUNTRIES it

---

always a pomegranate never a banana or cantaloupe Aristotle spoke of the "earth's guts," probably the round-worm *Gordius tractus altius egit iter*. We've come a long way. Icarus could not have been a girl (Icara). They had all been turned into trees. turkeys were force fed the fruit to see whether dispersal would resume It did. Extinctions are taking place all the time. more tee-shirt tautologies led by a desire for it's the spontaneous generation

---

*RAPIDI VICINIA SOLIS MOLLIT ODORATAS* the Red Sea is an Ethiopian restaurant Iconic Systems are Stimulus Bound SO YOU TEND TO EAT TOO MUCH Front Page of Post: CRISIS SHOWDOWN EXTREMIST GROUPS POSSIBLE TARGET BLOCKADING AIRPORT BOYCOTT EXPLOSIONS SANCTIONS BOMB HIJACKING TERRORISTS HOSTAGES FUNDAMENTALISTS on days they serve french fries The problem is how to do ideal things in a

---

THE CHILD ASKED, What is the difference between the Buddha and the Statue of Liberty *pennarum vincula ceras* Liebniz was right there is an endocrine imbalance in these lines GO CONNECT YOUR DAMN DOTS! EXTERIOR WASH WAX EXIT LEFT THANKS COME BACK he was just at the beginning of his rope The problem is how to do ideal

---

*TABUERANT CERAE: nudos quatit ille lacertos* Nothing to do Nothing to do Stick some mustard in your shoe

SUFFERING FROM AMUSIA driving through the Fallen Rock Zone beaver-like mesomorph pitches thermal panes (*Lips draw in as if pulled by a string*) Eggs are ovoid for good reason. *remigioque carens non ullas percipit auras* The prob

---

NATURAL SELECTION: But what does it mean? (the check is in the mail) "the suction of the infinite," another RO-MAN-TIC idea *nihil est sine ratione/oraque caerulea patrium clamantia nomen* U-haul Adventure in Moving family fun & fitness The problem is

---

To Turnpike we need language to transmit acquired characteristics hence punctuated evolution WORLDS TALLEST WATERSPHERE Pay Toll ½ Mile how did Socrates save Xenophon's life? MOVE IT YOURSELF WITH RYDER 11 killed in sidewalk cafe (Terrible Air) TOLL AHEAD

---

War with Spain would secure Cuba and the Philippines PIG RAN OUT FROM UNDER BED *excipiuntur aqua* large flat surfaces tend to warp *quae nomen traxit ab illo* The problem is how to do ideal things

---

polyphony even an abundance of possibility *ad pater infelix, nec iam pater, "Icare," dixit, "Icare," dixit "ubi es"?* or KLEBNIKOV

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Second Thoughts: Ideal Things, Fallen World, in (implication is

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PETER GIZZI

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NOCTURNE  
THIRTY SENTENCES FOR NO ONE  
CARPE DIEM  
HUBRIS

## NOCTURNE

The day is an abandoned article.  
In this miscellany I cannot  
Find a way to speak.  
To say water lights at eventide  
Is seamless. Indecipherable  
Cause that extends out  
The window to steeple  
Leads to lip stain.  
Having been in your mouth  
I walk the finger of the sundial  
Home and bruise the winter skyline  
To psalm. The day goes to ground  
As the sun drags over antique hills  
With only a memory of heat burning  
In another quadrant of the brain.  
And as for beauty—don't say it.  
The day is down and I dismount.



## THIRTY SENTENCES FOR NO ONE

It begins with socks in a drawer and continues to laundry bags to the future. In the Food Mart everything is above the child's head. Always looking up. Always lifting our eyes to heaven. The horizon is your mother's repose on the divan after daily chores. Outside rain repeats rain. I remember wanting hugs but was given food. I have grown into the sweater my aunt gave me. I was born on the third chapter of the novel forever asking what happened in the beginning. In the beginning sky. In the beginning earth. The aquarium is a prism at sunset in the library which articulates light on the spines as both a constant and an ephemeral beauty. Come over to our house. I have grown into this sky I wear about my shoulders everywhere I am. The hamper in the mind is endless. Let me work my image into soil and treebark and leafstem. This is not who I remember. The first body was an environment a landmark on the frontier of tomorrow. The body of discourse is an apology of abuses and I am without reparation. In the meaning of the day the way one turns and looks—eyes for hands. Today the stranger the exile and spook are in my shaving mirror. In my dream you are real. I am as one who each day stands behind the tapestry and receives the needle to pull the thread taut and pass it back through. The design is no one's. Is there justice in every sentence? Then I read 'death is not being unable to communicate but no longer being able to be understood' or something like that. Grass was the first species to cover the earth. I am incomplete. Indeed. All that was left is the state and the miles under my feet.

## CARPE DIEM

for Connell McGrath

Sun top drive and a lonely garage  
Reminds me of static afternoons  
With a book with a pestle or  
Shade of another chemistry.  
Time out says the trees and  
Flock of geese coming in  
To land in the new season.  
What to do about *this*,  
Tho you say I am specific  
As the ailanthus buds in May.  
That there is a this instead of  
The sky or the tree and how is  
The sky going to mean without  
This day this place this afternoon  
To lament and prostrate particulars  
Into a smote of pain opposed to  
A wound a color on what shingle  
That houses a telling way into who?  
I am rounding a period out  
Of an afternoon's napping, escape  
Is not possible chimes the waking  
Bells of vespers, and it is now  
I want to tell of this absence  
This impossible vista I must  
Cross to see you. This then.  
My envoi of evening.

## HUBRIS

Grief is a rut  
I'm quick to furnish  
A frieze of dust and tears  
And the garden is abortive  
Lawn chairs (empty)  
Clank under a leaded sky  
Spring's a heavy while  
The reflecting pool is only  
A surface without consideration  
Others sink to this music  
As I double clutch into the ozone

The room I inhabit (DADA)  
Is mottled and waterstained  
These ruins are my champions  
Sword strokes into air cut deep  
And to trade wounds for words  
Here  
I'm afraid I won't return  
And the winds ask "who are  
you saving your kisses for?"  
This architecture prevents closure  
And I seek protection  
From another morning's weaponry  
I am hiding  
As who abstracts into a god.



DB'87



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